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THE KEEPER OF THE FERRY.

By the Author of "*The Bondage of Brandon*".

CHAPTER XXIV.

BOSCOE BELLINGHAM.

My hair is grey, but not with years—

Nor grew it white

In a single night.

As men's have grown from sudden fears.

My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,

But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil;

And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air

Are bann'd and bar'd.

The Prisoner of Chillon.

As Arthur stood in an attitude of expectation, with his eye to the rusty keyhole of the door which gave admission to the ice-house, a sepulchral voice, which was horribly dismal, exclaimed:

"I am a prisoner, release me! If you are a Christian, and have any charity, release me! For I have been confined here by one who has the heart of a fiend, until I have lost all account of time. My reason totters to its fall. I know not what I say. I have only one prayer, one watchword, one cry. It is liberty! Give me liberty—let me see the light of heaven once more!"

Arthur trembled from head to foot as these weird, mystic words fell upon his ears. He knew not what to make of them. Was he conversing with some maniac, purposely confined in that lone tower?

Before he proceeded further in the matter, he was determined to put certain questions to the prisoner, with a view of elucidating the facts of so extraordinary an occurrence.

If the captive was a lunatic, and he released him, it was within the bounds of probability that he might, in his fits of insanity, destroy his deliverer.

"Who placed you where you are?" he said.

"Mr. Montague Capel," was the reply.

"Why did he do

[ARTHUR LIBERATING ROSCOE BELLINGHAM.]

"Because he was unjustly suspicious."

"Shall I go to Mr. Capel, and inform him of your wish to be set at liberty?"

"Fool!" hissed the imprisoned man, between his teeth. "Have I not told you that he, and he alone, is the cause of my misery. How then can you expect that he will be a consenting party to my release?"

"I do not know that I ought to interfere," said Arthur.

"Not interfere!" almost shrieked the prisoner.

"Oh! man, whoever you are, do not say that. Do not consign me to the very abyss of despair. I have been prevented from dashing my brains out against the wall by the wild hope that some day I should be free. From the sound of your voice you should be young."

"I am young."

"Then you cannot be hard-hearted or bad."

"I am neither one nor the other."

"For the love of God, then, take compassion upon me. I am well off. Do you want money? You shall have it. Are you ambitious? I am well connected, and have interest. You shall be promoted. Let me conjure you to release me. Run, my friend, run and procure an axe with which you may break this horrid door in pieces, and give me that liberty for which I am pining."

So impassioned was this appeal, that Arthur could not resist it.

"Wait a quarter of an hour," he replied, "and I will come back with some weapon with which I will try to release you."

He did not stay to hear the thanks of the prisoner, but hurried off as fast as his legs would carry him to the stableyard, in one corner of which was a woodhouse, in which axes, mallets, wedges, and other instruments for chopping, breaking, and splitting wood were kept.

He put a couple of wedges in his pocket, and slung an axe over his shoulder.

On leaving the yard, he met Mr. Capel, who exclaimed, with a kind smile of greeting:

"Whither away, my little man?"

Arthur blushed, and was at a loss for a reply.

"Is your expedition a secret?"

"No, sir?"

"What is it, then?"

"I made a bet with Sinclair that I could split up a log better than he could," said Arthur, thinking that deception in the interests of the poor prisoner was excusable.

"Ah! I perceive," replied Mr. Capel. "You are desirous of showing them the Australian method, I suppose, in the same spirit as that which made you display your rough riding, to the imminent danger of your neck. Run along, or you will keep your companions waiting."

Mr. Capel little guessed that in dismissing the lad in this careless and jocular manner he was signing the warrant for his ruin; but so it was.

Arthur was just as far from thinking that by liberating the captive he was doing his benefactor an irreparable injury, and depriving himself of a good home and a kind friend.

When he reached the ice-house again, the same sepulchral voice said:

"Is it you?"

"It is."

"How are you armed?"

"I have an axe and some wedges."

"Are you strong?"

"As strong as most lads of my age."

"Good!" replied the prisoner.

"Where shall I strike the door? Hit with might and main, so that your work may be over quickly, and no one interrupt you."

Arthur raised the axe, which was not very ponderous, and administered a blow to the door which made it rattle again.

Another and another were delivered in quick succession, but it was evident that the task would be a lengthy one.

For full half an hour Arthur continued at his work.

The perspiration ran down his face in streams, and he felt faint and tired.

The prisoner encouraged him with his voice, and

uttered wild cries, such as might proceed from a savage man in a state of unworried excitement.

Suddenly the woodwork gave way, and another vigorous blow sent it flying into the ice-house.

A long, black, dirt begrimed hand, with nails at the end of the fingers like the talons or claws of a bird, was protruded through the aperture.

This was the hand of the captive.

The door swung back on its rusty hinges, and the imprisoned man came forth. He staggered along in a drunken manner; for he was delirious with joy.

All at once he closed his eyes, for the unworried light blinded him. Then he groped his way like one visited heavily by heaven and deprived of sight.

Arthur was able to observe him narrowly, and he did so.

The few clothes he had upon his back were ragged and tattered; his dark hair was as long as a woman's, and had become coarse and bristly; his features were pointed and angular, and there was an expression of ferocious despair on his face, which, when he again opened his eyes, gave way to one of frenzied delight.

His first act on recovering his sight was to look up at the sky and fold his hands together, as if he were giving thanks to Providence for its mercy. When his brief but fervent orisons were over, he threw himself upon the ground, and kissed the grass with his lips as if he loved it.

Arthur stood still, leaning upon his axe, awaiting the time when it would suit this singular being to speak.

"Come here, my friend," he said, at length. "Let me shake you by the hand. If ever it is in my power to do you a service, you may command me. I have been miserably unfortunate; but I hope my troubles are now over. What month and what year is it?"

Arthur told him.

"God help me!" exclaimed the poor fellow, after making a short arithmetical calculation. "For nearly ten years have I been an inmate of that dreadful hole. Nearly ten years! Do I look wild? Am I not savage in my appearance?"

Arthur was obliged, in candour, to confess that he was wild.

"I thought so. What else could I expect? Is the Lady Elma alive?"

His voice trembled as he put the question.

"The Lady Elma?" repeated Arthur, shaking his head as if he had never heard the name, or had heard it once, but where and when he could not remember.

"You do not know her? I am speaking of Mr. Montague Capel's wife."

"He has no wife."

"Then my fears are confirmed. She must be dead, or—his face clouded over—"her fate has been similar to my own."

"Who are you?" asked Arthur, burning with curiosity.

"An unfortunate man."

"Your name?"

"Roscoe Bellingham. You will hear my history before long; for it shall be blazoned far and wide throughout the country. I cannot stop to tell you now. The very air is pregnant with danger. I must away."

As he spoke, Mr. Bellingham grasped the boy's hand and wrung it affectionately. The next moment he was running with the fleetness of a deer across the park, in the direction of the nearest town.

In this strange way did the sequel to Lady Elma's story commence. Arthur was the humble instrument, in the hands of a higher power, for the unravelling of a terrible mystery and a detectable crime.

Mr. Montague Capel, although a courageous man, was not sufficiently hardened to be able to embrue his hands in the blood of a fellow-creature. He had procured the skeleton with which he had terrified his poor wife from a museum, and he had led her to believe that it was the skeleton of her cousin. This was infamous enough; but he had added to his infamy by shutting up the unfortunate man in the deserted, lonely, disused ice-house, which he provisioned every two months with a small cask of ship's biscuits, a small box of salt junk, and a butt of water, although there was little lack of that liquid, as it fell through the bricks, and formed into little puddles on the floor.

As Mr. Capel's visits to his captive were always made at night, he stood little chance of being detected; and even if any one had noticed him going to the ice-house, they would never have guessed what his motive for going there was.

Arthur returned to the hall with his mind in a whirl. Mr. Pope, for the first time since they had been acquainted, found him inattentive and preoccupied.

Two or three days passed without Arthur saying a word about what had occurred. On the morning of the third day Mr. Capel received a letter from an at-

torney, who was no other than Mr. Sockton Sack, who managed the affairs of most people residing in that particular county.

He had not as yet discovered the escape of his prisoner; for he never went in the direction of the ice-house unless he wished to give the unhappy Mr. Bellingham some provisions.

Opening the letter in an unconcerned manner, he read:

"DEAR SIR.—I am instructed by my client, Mr. Roscoe Bellingham—"

"Roscoe Bellingham!" ejaculated Mr. Capel, turning as pale as death. "He is dead—dead at least to the world. I—I cannot believe it."

Before he read another line of the letter he put on his hat and left the house, running across the park to the ice-pit; the open and shattered door convinced him that his prisoner had indeed made his escape, and with a deep groan he sat down upon a bank, and covered his face with his hands.

"Fool that I was," he said, "to stop half-way. I have made myself amenable to the law, and I am liable to transportation if convicted; that to a man of my habits and in my position is infinitely worse than death. Fool that I was not to murder him at once, and put him out of my path. Your half-and-half villains always come to the ground."

Feeling that it was no time for regrets or indulging a retrospect, he took the letter from his pocket and read it carefully from beginning to end.

Sockton Sack continued:

"—to make you the following offer. If you will consent to release the Lady Elma, and suffer her to leave your roof unmolested, and act of her own free will, my client will undertake to withdraw from a prosecution which has been already commenced; the conduct of which rests with me. This generous offer is well worthy your consideration, for I need not tell so shrewd a man as yourself what the certain consequence of a prosecution would be. Liberty or penal servitude—take your choice.—Yours, &c.,

"SOCKTON SACK.

"P. S.—The Lady Elma must reach my office, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, to-morrow evening before dark, or you will be arrested on a criminal charge."

Mr. Montague Capel's face brightened as he read this letter. It seemed to him that Roscoe Bellingham imagined that his cousin was held in deepest vice, and that both himself and his lawyer were afraid to make an arrest until she was liberated, lest Mr. Capel should, if he found himself hard pressed, refuse to say a single word about her whereabouts, and leave her to starve to death.

Pulling his hat over his brows, he rose from the mossy bank upon which he had been sitting, and strode rapidly towards the house. He was in a most difficult dilemma, and he hardly knew the way out of it. Several ways suggested themselves, but it was not easy to choose the best.

He went at once to the Dame, and, taking the key from his pocket, unlocked the door.

His intention was to offer the Lady Elma her liberty, and see if he could not regain the love which he had lost and forfeited by his brutality and ill-treatment.

As he entered the room, he started back in affright, for the skeleton had fallen forward, and was a mass of shapeless broken bones upon the floor. By its side was stretched the Lady Elma.

Mr. Capel advanced to her, thinking she was in a swoon; but when he grasped her wrist, he found it cold and pulseless.

No breath issued from her lips, not enough to agitate a piece of swansdown.

He fell on his knees beside her, but he rose up again almost instantly, with a terrible cry; for there was not the smallest particle of doubt that the wretched lady was dead.

Dead!

No one witnessed her last moments.

It was impossible to say how she had died, but the most reasonable supposition was that she had been oppressed with a mighty fear, owing to the falling of the skeleton, and that her heart, so cruelly tortured for so many years, had burst at last.

Mr. Montague Capel did not impress a single kiss upon that marble forehead. He stood for some time as if entranced. The events of the last ten years floated mistily before him, and he saw that if he valued his own safety, England was no longer a place for him. The problem of his life was still unsolved. He could not say whether or no he had punished his wife wrongfully, although had he but known it, her fair spirit was even then winging its way towards the abode of the guilty.

Without saying one word to any of his dependents, to his nephews, or to Arthur, he walked slowly down the avenue, and went to London, en route for the Continent.

For many years he gave no sign.

CHAPTER XXV.

MARY GOODALL THINKS SHE SEES A GHOST.

Yes, love indeed is light from heaven!
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared—by Alix given
To lift from earth our low desire
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But heaven itself descends in love.

The Gleam.

THE porter held Tom Harvey in a tight grasp; but Tom was almost frantic with excitement. If Hercules himself had encircled him with his powerful arms, he would have struggled for the mastery.

Swinging himself round, he got one of his hands free, and seized the porter by the throat, which he compressed with all his force.

The man grew black in the face, and a low cough, indicative of speedy suffocation, was heard. In less than two minutes' time the man fell back upon the hard flags with which the floor was paved, insensible.

This was Tom Harvey's hour of triumph; but he was wise in his generation, and did not lose a moment.

His hand was speedily inserted in the man's pocket in search of the key of the prison door, or more correctly the keys; for there were no less than three locks which were all made use of at night.

He found them.

Walking stealthily to the door, so that the noise of his footsteps should not be heard, he unlocked one lock after another, and found himself outside the walls of the prison.

His only object in escaping was to let Mary Goodall know that he lived, and thus frustrate the inglorious marriage which Mr. Lister imagined he was about to contract with the daughter of the keeper of the ferry.

If he could only reach the keeper's cottage and speak half-a-dozen words to Molly, he would be content.

Walking quickly through the town, he made his way to the country. When he reached the open, he took to his heels, and ran as quickly as he could.

He was acquainted with that part of the country, and he had no difficulty in finding his way. The distance to the "Wash," however, was considerable, and he felt greatly fatigued after two hours' running.

It is not the habit of gaol officials to feed overmuch or too highly those who are committed to their charge, and Tom Harvey lacked the strength to make a long journey.

He continued to crawl on until he reached a small roadside public-house.

It was a fine moonlight night, and he took the liberty of opening a window and effecting an entrance. He was fully aware that he was committing a burglary; but he felt that if he did not have some beer, or something of that description, to put new life into him, he must drop on the road.

When he had made his way into the bar he laid hold of one of the beer engines and drew himself a foaming tankard of porter; that was not good enough for him, so he emptied that into the sink, tried another handle and procured a quart of the best treacle ale. This satisfied him, for he drank it to the dregs.

He felt much obliged to the landlord for leaving his window unfastened, but he thought it would be imprudent to wake him up for the express purpose of making him aware of his gratitude.

So he took his departure and a bottle of brandy at the same time, and continued his journey.

When he reached the arm of the sea, which he was desirous of crossing, he came to a standstill. It was too dark to allow of the signal being availed of. He was afraid that if he waited for morning the police might follow him and carry him back to prison.

Anything was preferable to such a contingency. There was no boat within miles of him; he was literally in a state of despair. His education was not sufficiently classical to enable him to think of Hero and Leander, and remember how the latter swam across the Hellespont, afeat subsequently performed by Lord Byron, but the idea of swimming across the "Wash" occurred to him nevertheless; and rather than fall into the clutches of the police, be dragged back to gaol, and so allow the dreaded and detestable marriage between Mary Goodall and the steward to take place, he determined to risk his life upon the fickle waves.

Separation from Mary had only made his love more intense than it was before Mr. Lister attacked him in the savage and mauldrous manner already related. He felt that life without her would be worth nothing, and that if she were to contract the marriage, of which he had in a most remarkable manner been apprised, he would have nothing left to live for.

He was a young and unsophisticated man. Country born and country bred, he knew little or nothing of the world, and his heart was large and generous. He loved Molly as all pure hearts love their idols, and he

that her grief; and treated her

was so passionately attached to her that he would have gladly died at her feet to save her from pain. If she had said to him, I wish to marry another, because I feel that I can never be happy with you, he would have relinquished his claim to her hand, though the effort cost him a broken heart.

The happy hours of the past floated before him in a golden vision. There was a sort of sunset in the horizon of his memory, which bathed all in a flood of magnificent light.

He saw himself the happy, accepted suitor of Mary Goodall; he heard her whisper words of love, felt the gentle, affectionate pressure of her hand, and caught the dewy zephyr of her breath as it was borne towards him, fragrant as frankincense, when she addressed him in passionate accents.

After a time, all these delightful reminiscences faded away, and there was a blank; the golden sun went down, he was recalled to the stern realities of daily life; he was again the outcast, the prisoner, the hunted man; his nature was overwrought; he lifted up his voice and wept.

This concession to natural weakness did him good. He felt refreshed and chastened, as if he had gone through the fire, and come out of the terrible ordeal triumphant and unscathed.

Before plunging into the water, he drank a large portion of the contents of the bottle of brandy he had appropriated at the public-house which he had entered so unscrupulously.

The night was chilly, and the water cold. Had he not been half mad with apprehension, he would not have attempted the perilousfeat of swimming so great a distance; but the knowledge that Mary Goodall was to be sacrificed the next morning, caused him to become rash and reckless, and he cared not what he did.

The tide was running out, so that he had to swim against the stream to avoid the danger of being carried out to sea.

Wading into the water, up to his waist, he struck out for the opposite shore, and commanded himself to heaven.

It was a long and tedious swim, and he more than once repented his rashness in undertaking it; but having commenced it, it would have been worse than folly to have gone back.

Steadily he persevered on his way, as only a brave lover knows how.

Day broke when he was about three-quarters of the way across. It was not a grand and glorious sunrise. The horizon was darkened with patches of grey, dashed in the east with a few yellow rays. The signs of the heavens did not seem auspicious. A sea-gull uttered its lugubrious note, and gyrated in eccentric circles over his head.

His strokes became feeble and sluggish. He made his slow way through the water with difficulty, and he looked longingly at the shore.

The tide had swept him some distance below the cottage of the keeper of the ferry.

He threw his remaining strength into a few prodigious efforts, and then succumbed; his eyes fell down, and with a mournful cry he gave up the struggle.

"Good-bye, dear Mary," he murmured, in a fond tone. "Good-bye for ever. I have done my best; but fate is against me. May you be happy. God bless you, Molly."

A few briny drops fell from his eyes, and mingled with the water of the salt sea.

Despair took possession of his face.

He was firmly convinced that his last hour had come; but salvation was at hand, though he knew it not. As his feet fell down powerless through the waves, he touched the bottom.

Oh, the joy of that moment! the inexpressible delight which pervaded his frame gave him fresh strength, and he was enabled, by a miracle, to push up the shelving bank and scramble to the land. All he could do, however, was to drag himself from a watery grave.

Once on dry land, he fell on his back, senseless and exhausted.

By a strange chance, the spot which received him was one close to the place where Mr. Lister had attacked him, and where the kind-hearted smugglers had picked him up when he was bleeding to death from the severe wounds which the remorseless steward had inflicted upon him.

There he lay, breathing heavily, and in need of assistance.

Mary Goodall had made it her practice to rise early every morning for the purpose of making a pilgrimage to Petrel House and its neighbourhood, with a vain illusive hope that she might find her lover. She would speak to the groom and stablemen, and ask them if they had heard any tidings of Tom Harvey, and they would reply in the negative. They knew that her mind was disordered, owing to her excessive grief; and though they were rough fellows, they treated her tenderly.

She went about with her hair dishevelled and unkempt, a picture of sorrow and of misery. Already the country people had given her the name of the ferryman's mad daughter, and they sighed pitifully as she passed them. The poor girl would go up to a perfect stranger, and say, in plaintive accents:

"Have you seen him?"

"Seen who?" would be the reply.

"Tom Harvey."

"I know no one of that name."

"Oh! how sad. I loved him so. He must have gone to heaven; will you tell me the way there? I wish to join him. I loved him so, and he was all in all to me."

The stranger would pass on with a glance of commiseration, and Molly would sink down by the roadside, and press her hand to her forehead, saying in an agonized voice: "Oh! my head, my poor head, how it throbs and beats. My brain will burst or—I shall go mad. Mad! I wish God in his mercy would deprive me of my senses, for then I should forget."

Poor girl! It would have been happiness indeed for her if she could have forgotten all and everything.

On the morning which saw Tom Harvey lying in an insensible condition on the shingles of the beach at Feuny Droyton, Mary took her morning walk as usual, and bent her steps in the direction of Petrel House. Her head drooped, and her eyes were filled with tears. She did not look much like a bride on her wedding morning, and yet her parents had arranged that she should be married to the steward of Baskerdale that very day, and that worthy was congratulating himself upon the success of his plans, and thinking that vice was triumphant over virtue, and that therefore he had hit upon the best policy after all, which in spite of the copy books, was not honesty. He was already holding the joy cup to his lips, and poising it steadily in mid-air so as to drink deeply of its contents; but he forgot the old adage which says that "there is many a slip betwixt the cup and the lip," and in forgetting so wholesome a maxim, he was committing the act of a foolish man.

Tom Harvey's body lay directly in Mary's path, so that she could not avoid seeing it. Suddenly she stopped abruptly, for her eyes fell upon those well-known features, whose loss she had mourned so truly. With a wild maniacal stare she gazed upon them; gazed till her eyes filled with tears, and her mouth twiched convulsively, for she thought that some spiritual illusion was mocking her.

The situation forcibly recalled Longfellow's "Evangeline:" Gabriel penetrated the heart of the forest and passed within a few yards of her he loved better than life itself, and yet neither was conscious of the proximity of the other.

Tom Harvey could but have waked from his torpor; if—but suppositions are useless. He lay like a rock, as senseless and as stupid; and uttering a piercing shriek which rang through the air like a clarion, and round the curlews from their holes in the rocks, Molly ran from the spot, exclaiming in terror-laden accents, "A ghost, a ghost! Oh, God! a ghost!"

CHAPTER XXVI

THE RED LETTER MANUSCRIPT.

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one;
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The morning from his mantle grey.

Siege of Corinth.

Such is the pleasure of projecting, that many content themselves with a succession of visionary schemes, and wear out their allotted time in the calm amusement of contriving what they never attempt or hope to execute.—Johnson.

A COUPLE of nights' rest did Spanish Joe's foot so much good that he was able to walk, much to his gratification and delight; but the pleasure arising from his recovery was very much damped by the strange fact of Gosh's having, as it were, disappeared.

Rufman thought he was, his attachment to his friend was sincere, and he could only come to the conclusion that he had made some blunder, met with some ill-luck, and fallen into the hands of those Philistines, the police, who who were the natural enemies of his race, just as the hawk is the enemy and sworn foe of a sparrow.

Spanish Joe had a certain sort of contempt for a county gaol, and the county constabulary.

He thought that a professional burglar, accustomed to the sharp practice of the London detective, ought at any time to be more than a match for those whom he contemptuously termed country bumpkins.

When, as nearly as he could guess, it was nine o'clock, and Gosh had not made his appearance, he felt certain that something had happened.

He thought that he should not be doing his duty if he did not attempt to find out where he was, and try to render him some assistance.

With this object in view, he took leave of the two

charcoal burners, Shadrach and Bendigo, giving each of them a couple of sovereigns for their hospitality and kindness.

"Good-bye," said Shadrach; "I hope you'll give us a look when you're by this way again."

"You may take your davy," replied Joe with emphasis, "that I never will be this way again, if I know it. Not if I know it! oh, no! not for me, thank you! It may be a fine country, and its woods may supply wood which make very fine charcoal; but I've seen enough of it to enable me to write a handbook about it! but not for me! never no more!"

"You'll please yourself, of course!" said Bendigo: "but we shall at all times be glad to have a friendly glass with you."

"Thank you kindly for that same, mate," answered Joe.

Shadrach had disappeared in the hut, from which he emerged, holding a stone bottle in his hand.

"We must drink together before we parts," he said.

"I'm agreeable," replied Spanish Joe.

The men drank deep draughts of whiskey out of a tin mug, wished one another success and prosperity, and Joe took his leave.

The charcoal burners directed him to the nearest town, the shortest and most direct cut to which was alongside the railroad, which Joe struck after an hour's brisk walking. As there was no train in sight, he walked along the six-foot way, immersed in his thoughts, which were not of the pleasantest description.

"Get off there—you're trespassing," said a rough voice at his elbow.

He looked up, and saw three men, two of whom were carrying a trunk—a headless body—upon a gate, which had been hastily torn from its hinges.

Joe had no difficulty in recognising his friend and companion Gosh.

The sudden shock of so terrible a meeting, turned the man sick; he staggered, and nearly fell down the embankment.

"It ain't a nice sight!" exclaimed one of the men; "it pretty nigh upset me at first—I don't wonder at you feeling queer, master!"

"Wh—where did you find him? ho—how did this happen?" asked Joe in a breathless manner.

"Found him hard by," replied the man; "we're on the signals together, and in going up the line we com'd across him. I suppose he was tired of his life, and went and laid his neck over one of the rails, and had it cut off by a luggage train. There'll be an inquest, I specs, but they can't do much more than bring it in 'suicide while in an unsound state of mind,' that'll be about the size of the ticket, I'm thinking."

"Horrible! horrible!" ejaculated Joe, covering his face with his hands, as if he was desirous of shutting out the dreadful spectacle.

"Perhaps you knew him, master," said the signal man.

But Joe gave them no answer. He threw himself down by the side of the line, upon the grass, which was rank and luxuriant, and exclaimed in heart-rending tones:

"I wish it had been me, I do. He was a good 'un, spite of his getting drunk. I shall never have such a pal agin, never—never. It's a awful sight. It's enough to make a chap leavo off thieving, and take to getting an honest living."

The man passed on and left him to mourn his departed comrade. For hours he lay on the green grass. Trains up and down swept by with their whirlwind rush, but he took no heed of them. Night fell, and he still lay on the grass, lamenting his friend. It was dark when he rose and made his way to the town. When he arrived there he was an altered man.

It was a remarkable fact that Hindon on reaching Baskerdale was able to snatch a few hours' sleep. An ordinary man would have been too much prostrated by the horrible events of the night to close his eyes, but he was hardened and callous to all but detection. He could have lived on for years with sin clinging around his soul, as did Eugene Aram, and no one about him would have suspected the awful truth.

In the morning he, as usual, waited upon Sir Thomas, bringing him his shaving water and the local newspaper, which the baronet was accustomed to read in bed, and gossip over its contents with his factotum before rising.

He opened the damp sheet, and cast his eyes over its hums.

"Hullo, Hindon!" he exclaimed.

"What is it?" replied Hindon.

"Why, bless me, this is news, if you like. What do you think? 'Pon my word, it's great news. It is indeed. You will never guess, so I'd better tell you. The member for the county's dead—died last night, of apoplexy. There's a chance for me, Hindon, eh? What do you say to my coming forward in the Liberal interest?"

"I think," replied Hindon, bluntly, "that the Liberal interest is a mistake."

"A mistake, my good fellow? What d'ye mean? Isn't it the cause of the people, and all that?"

"Of course it is; but what's the use of fighting the battle of the people? Are the people represented? have they votes?"

"Some of 'em have," replied the baronet, looking crestfallen.

"Some! yes, but they are comparatively few in number; and in a Conservative county like this, they cannot vote as they like—they must vote as their landlords tell them, or they will find out their mistake on quarter-day. They will have their rents raised, or receive notice to quit, or something equally oppressive and unpleasant."

"By Jove! you're right, Hindon," exclaimed Sir Thomas. "There is no doubt about your head being well set on your shoulders. Go down-stairs, and look in the library for some history of the county. I dare say you will find a book of that sort. I should like to see whether it has been a Liberal or Conservative constituency."

Hindon did as he was told, and went into the library, which was a fantastic apartment filled with solemn-looking tomes reposing upon oaken shelves. There were drawers filled with discoloured volumes, yellow with age, which would have transported a bibliophile to the seventh heaven. Hindon began ransacking these in a careless manner, and came upon a drawer full of manuscripts. He turned them over one by one, scarcely knowing why he took up a particular manuscript which was written in red ink.

It was partially moth-eaten.

On the cover was printed in large straggling letters, which seemed to have been made by the trembling hand of an old man, the following singular words:—

AENEAS THE TREASURE.

The word treasure had a wonderful attraction for Hindon; he had always hoped to find a treasure somewhere or other. From his youth upwards he had been of a sanguine turn of mind as regards treasures. He often kept his eyes, when walking, fixed upon the pavement or the road, in the hope that he might find a pocket-book full of bank notes which some unwaried person had dropped, or else that he might stumble upon a diamond ring, or a nugget, or some equally valuable article. He had more than once asked Sir Thomas to bore for coal, which he said he felt assured would be found somewhere on the estate.

Anxiously he turned over the leaf, and began to read the contents of the red letter manuscript.

To his surprise, the memorandum, for it was nothing else, ran in this wise:

"The year 1660 being one of great trouble for this our country of England, it did seem fitting unto me, Guy Hurston Wicherley, seventeenth baronet of that name, to conceal a certain treasure, lest it should fall into evil hands and I should be deprived of my substance. To do this effectually I did go to some expense, for it was a matter to be done with secrecy; and I did have to pay largely for the same. A trusty bricklayer, he did build me a crypt or vault, wherein I did place my treasure; and this memorandum is for the better enabling of me to recover the same when these troublous times shall have passed. The treasure has been valued at twenty thousand guineas, which is a large sum in these days of depreciated currency; and the jewels, I am persuaded, were well worth double the sum at which the valuer appraised them. Now, the following is for my guidance and for that of my heirs, if aught parlous should happen unto me: 'Go ye to the ruins of the old chapel, which is in the Home close, and placing your foot against the wall which yet stands, taking care to have the heel in the centre, under the oriel window, measure twelve good paces. Having done this, turn ye to the right, and take half the former number of paces: this shall lead you to the spot in which the treasure is deposited. Dig ye with shovel and with pick, and ye shall come to a stone coffin, in which lie bones. Remove this. Go down deeper, and ye shall come upon a slab: this take up, and, behold, the crypt shall be revealed.'

Just there the moths had done great damage, and only a few words could be distinguished, among which "Beware—secret spring—loud noise—close—press centre," were the most prominent.

To these disconnected words Hindon could attach no meaning.

All he knew or cared was, that he had come upon a red letter manuscript, which told him where to find a treasure; and he resolved that few hours should elapse before he had it in his possession.

(To be continued.)

LOST AND FOUND.—Early in September, a man named Coleman shipped at Callao, on board the ship Brothers' Pride. Two days after the vessel left port the man disappeared, and was supposed to have been

drowned. On the vessel arriving at Queenstown, while preparations were being made to cast anchor, a human face, to the consternation of the sailors, appeared above the hold, then the entire body, and the apparition advanced towards the men, and said, "I may as well give you a pull, boys." As soon as the sailors recovered from their momentary alarm, they recognized in the apparition their long-lost comrade, looking very dirty, no doubt, but not otherwise the worse for his long incarceration. He had been eighty days concealed in the hold of the vessel among bags of guano. How he managed to subsist, or on what he did subsist, is a matter of mystery, rendered greater by the fact that the crew were rather short of provisions for part of the voyage. He was taken into custody.

I KNEW A LITTLE MAIDEN.

I KNEW a little maiden once,
With eyes so deeply blue,
Whose smiles were sought by every one,
Yet only gained by few.
Yet she'd a kindly word for all,
So well and truly spoken,
It often soothed the aching breast,
Or healed the heart nigh broken.
Her teeth were like a string of pearls,
Her brow so snowy white,
And such a smile she ever wore,
Scarce seen, and yet how bright.
It spoke of joy to every one,
And joy and gladness only;
Its light dispelled the darksome shade
From many a heart once lone lonly.
Can I forget that winsome maid,
Or pass her goodness by?
Alas! for all that's left to me,
Is her dear memory.
The sweetest flowers on earth are for
The shortest seasons given;
They blossom here a little time,
And bloom afresh in heaven.

S. E. C.

MEZAR THE MISER.

CHAPTER XIII.

I hear
He has made good the promise of his youth,
And the ripe villain now is finished in him.

Schiller.

ORPHA was fortunate enough to find Willis Linton in the office.

"You here again!" he said, as he welcomed her with a pleasant smile. "What has happened now?"

"Several strange things," replied Orpha, seating herself in the chair he proffered her. "In the first place, I have found my husband."

"Indeed!" returned Linton, a slight cloud gathering over his face as if the information did not altogether please him.

"In the next, I have discovered Mr. Lathrop Moneyment."

"That is the best news of the two."

"And I have come to place the certificate of deposit in your hands, with full authority to recover the money if possible."

"Better still. I have this week been admitted to practice at the bar, and am now a full-fledged lawyer. That shall be my first case, and I am sanguine of success."

"I am glad to hear you say so, for I am greatly in need of money."

"For what purpose?"

"To obtain a divorce from my husband."

"That shall be my second case," returned Linton, brightening up; "and, I assure you, there will be no difficulty in obtaining that. You have a very strong plea. Can you favour me with particulars?"

"Not altogether; but I will do so at the expiration of three days. Suffice it to say my husband's name is Wilner Carsteu."

"Indeed! I have heard of him—and not very favourably either. He bears the character of a wild, dissolute spendthrift, cut off from a very handsome fortune by his incensed father, who strove in vain to wean him from his evil courses. His brother, Percy, I see by the papers, has just returned from India. A very promising young man, as different from his brother Wilner as day is from night."

"Percy has not returned; it is Wilner, who has assumed that name, and, in conjunction with Lathrop Moneyment, is engaged in some nefarious design which I consider it a duty to frustrate."

"You astonish me—pray explain."

Orpha had intended to have kept a portion of her discovery in reserve; but considering that Willis could not aid her to the extent of his ability unless he possessed a full knowledge of the facts in the case,

she changed her determination, and told him all that had transpired.

"A strange affair," observed Linton, musingly, when she had finished. "Evidently a conspiracy to obtain Percy's fortune and the dowry of Samuela. If I am not greatly mistaken, we shall find, upon examination, that old Mezaz Pinkerton has a finger in the pie, though, of course, he is too cunning to appear in it openly. A splendid case, Orpha, take it altogether, which I shall take great delight in investigating, and which, if carried to a fortunate conclusion, will reward greatly to my credit. But leave me the certificate, and call again at the expiration of three days. If I am not wrong in my surmises, I shall have some progress to report."

Much inspired by his cheering words, Orpha placed the certificate (she had always carried it upon her person) in his hands, and took her departure.

She found Samuela anxious for some one with whom she could discuss the merits of Carsteu and Thurston Follansbee.

"What do you think of Percy?" she exclaimed, with animation, as soon as Orpha entered the room.

Orpha answered evasively, but Samuela did not heed her; she was too anxious to express her own opinion.

"I don't like him a bit," she rattled on. "A man, little, insignificant man, and frightfully awkward! Why, he used to be quite handsome, as a boy. I am sure I don't want to marry him, if I can help it. Thurston Follansbee is much the handsomest of the two!"

"A mean, little, insignificant man!" Orpha sighed as a retrospect of the past flashed through her mind. Could these epithets apply to the man she had once looked upon as the perfection of his sex? Yes, it was even so—and more.

Samuela's tongue wagged on the same topic until bedtime, and then Orpha had a respite, for which she was thankful; but she slept very little that night. The events of the day had so agitated her mind, that she found it impossible to banish the thoughts that came teeming into her head, filling her brain with all sorts of projects and devices.

Nor was she the only one who felt uneasiness from the incidents of the day.

The conspirators, having finished their dinner, sat over their wine, in earnest and perplexed deliberation. Old Mezaz, got up with great care in a suit of black and a white cravat, looked not unlike a missionary who had been among the heathen and met with poor success. He was the only one of the trio who seemed at ease. He cracked his almonds and smacked his withered lips over Widow Cliquot's champagne with great gusto.

"A bad case!" he kept saying, nodding his grey locks, sagely. "A bad case! That girl always makes trouble for me, always—always. I have always thought it a great pity that Calvin did not let her drown at the time of the flood. It's a great pity—a very great pity!"

"Why did not Calvin inform us that she was there? and then this encounter might have been avoided," cried Thurston, "though I don't know about that. The girl is there as a companion, and probably sees all visitors."

"I don't think Calvin is to blame," returned Mezaz, reflectively. "Perhaps he didn't know it."

"It was his business to find out. I seldom find fault with your proceedings, Mezaz, but I do think your interest in that country booby is a mistake. He has robbed you once, and my word for it, he will serve you some other slippery trick. It is the nature of the beast." When the detective brought him to you and made him disgorge what was left of the eight hundred pounds, he had contrived to get rid of two hundred of it. Why did you not let him go? Why recommend him to Mr. Goldschmidt as a coachman?"

"I did not want to see the lad starve," whined Mezaz, deprecatingly; "so I put him in the way to get an honest living."

"How benevolent!" sneered Thurston. "You can't humbug me. I know you too well; and I know that you are too deep an old file to do anything without a motive. Now, I think your motive, in introducing Calvin into the house of Jacob Goldschmidt, was that he might keep a watch upon Wilner and myself."

"How can you think so?" replied Mezaz, with an injured look.

But Thurston did think so, notwithstanding; though he said nothing more upon the subject.

"This is an unlucky business!" Thurston cried, changing the subject abruptly; "and I don't very well see how we are to get over it. The girl is sure of Wilner's identity, and will spoil the game unless we can find some way to stop her mouth."

"That she will," returned Wilner, moodily, speaking for the first time after a long silence; "and there was the very fiend in her eye when she told me she would give me three days to consider. It was no use my attempting to talk her over—she is determined to

is acknowledged as my wife, or she'll proclaim all about it, and as you say, spoil everything."

"Yes, unfortunately! I was young and green at the time, and her pretty face made a fool of me. I have paid pretty dearly for my folly. Look at my father's will, cutting me off with a beggarly allowance, and all on account of her. I had it in my heart to have choked her in the office, when she was venting her spite upon me; and I would have done so if I had thought the deed could have been concealed!"

Old Mezar chuckled to himself at this outburst, nodded his head approvingly, and sipped his wine with greater complacency.

"Can she prove this marriage, do you think?" asked Thurston, thoughtfully.

"I don't know, I'm sure. It was published in the newspapers at the time."

"But you married her under an assumed name?"

"Yes; Stephen Willis."

"Then how could she prove it?"

"The minister still lives, and he might be able to identify me."

"Right, right!" interposed old Mezar—"there is danger of that, because if Orpha speaks to Mr. Goldsmith, he might be at some pains to investigate the matter. If we had only Orpha to fear, and her claims on you, we need give ourselves no uneasiness. But she may provoke an investigation which would lead to unpleasant results, particularly if he should happen to discover that you are Wilner, and not Percy Carsten."

"Orpha's mouth must be stopped," exclaimed Thurston, emphatically.

"What will stop a woman's mouth?" asked Wilner, with a puzzled air.

"Death!" returned old Mezar, sententiously. "It's an infallible remedy."

Wilner looked blank at these words, whilst Thurston shook his head gravely.

They had not the same feeling against Orpha that Mezar entertained, no vindictive hatred to lead them into the perpetration of any overt act; and the proposal of engaging in the crime which Mezar's words seemed to indicate, was not to be thought of for a moment.

"No, no," said Thurston, "that will never do. The worst use you can put a man to is to hang him; and the worst use you can put a woman to is to kill her. I dare say you would like to hear of the girl's death—you have greater cause to wish it than either of us. But hitherto, in all our little transactions we have kept on the safe side of the law, and never put our necks or our precious liberty in danger; and I intend to pursue that line of conduct until I see more reason to deviate from it than I do at present. I think the girl can be 'silenced' without risking anything."

"How?" asked both Mezar and Wilner, simultaneously.

"Quite easily," replied Thurston, smiling with a conscious superiority over his associates. "Murder is but a bungling piece of work, at the best, and most always detected. I have a better plan. The girl has promised you, Wilner, to await your decision for three days. Very well; you shall send a note to her, of which I will be the bearer, to prevent accidents, and make delivery sure, informing her that you have come to a decision in her favour, and appointing a place of meeting to arrange plans for the future. She will think you have yielded to her threats, and will come readily. The place of meeting shall be at your old house in Canal Street, Mezar, which you have been unable to let, because you would not put the necessary repairs to it. I will take care of her there—keep her a close prisoner until you are married to Samuela, and then we can release her."

"But what if she makes trouble then?" asked Wilner, who could not as yet clearly see. "She might protest against me for bigamy."

"No danger of that," claimed in Mezar. "Lathrop's plan is good; and if he secures the girl for a fortnight, I'll take care she doesn't trouble us afterwards. Of course, when she comes to meet you she will not inform any one of her intentions. She leaves the house and does not return, and at the same time several valuable articles are missed (Calvin is in the house, you know), and she is naturally accused of the robbery. Under these circumstances they will be more likely to send her to prison on her return, than to listen to, or believe anything she could say against you."

"Very cunningly devised," rejoined Thurston, approvingly. "I think we have provided against the danger, and need labour under no further apprehension. You conceal the note, Wilner, and I will prepare the house for her reception. By the way, I must secure some one to act as garter—but that will not be a very difficult affair. But come now, let's smoke a cigar, stroll out, and have a game of billiards."

Thurston and Wilner went out with the intention of making a night of it, but Mezar tottered home to

his solitary lodging, to calculate the interest on his ill-gotten gains should their present scheme succeed.

CHAPTER XIV.

Come! be we bold, and make despatch! The work In this next day or two must thrive and grow More than it has for years! *The Piccolomini.*

The next morning Thurston Follansbee (the reader will observe that we call him by the name he adopted for the time, to preserve the thread of the story intact) called upon Samuela.

His visit was quite a short one, but he contrived during the conversation to slip a note into Orpha's lap whom he found as usual in company with Samuela. He then made his adieu and departed.

The first excuse she could make, Orpha hurried up to her room to peruse the note, which she instantly surmised must have come from Wilner. She tore it eagerly open and perused its contents, which were as follows :

"ORPHA.—I will do as you desire. Come to me, and we will arrange some plan for the immediate acknowledgement of our marriage. You will find me, in an hour's time, standing at the corner of Canal-street.—Your husband,"

"STEPHEN." The hour for which she had so long prayed had at last arrived. The stain would be removed from her name, and she could proudly give the lie to those who had defamed her. But the love which had lingered on, sickly, pining, but still endowed with life, and capable of being restored to all its pristine vigour, had met a cherishing return, for all these weary years, was now completely extinguished—dead; and its black ashes scattered far down the pathway of oblivion! Wilner could thank himself for this, and he might one day repent that he had thus ruthlessly cast away earth's brightest treasure—a pure, true woman's love.

She would see him, she thought, obtain the justice due to her rights, so tardily given, and then he might go his way and she would go hers, for there could be nothing between them after what had transpired.

She knew that his love (and she seriously questioned if he ever had in reality experienced that feeling for her) was now extinct, and once acknowledged as his wife, the law should break the chain that bound them and restore them both to freedom.

And when she was free—then—what then? Orpha dared not acknowledge to herself the thought that sent the conscious blood tingling into her cheeks.

She hastily donned her bonnet and shawl, obtained permission to absent herself for a short time from Samuela, whom she found immersed in the perusal of the last fashionable novel, and then went forth to meet her recreant husband.

She took an omnibus to the corner of Canal-street. She found Wilner standing at the corner, as his note had promised. He was in a state of nervous agitation, so great as to be apparent to Orpha at a single glance, but she attributed the matter to a different cause than the right one.

"Come this way," he said; and she followed him without a word.

He paused before a very dilapidated house, the windows broken, the doorsteps crumbling away—an old two-story dwelling, that looked as though in the last stages of decay.

"Do you live here?" asked Orpha, greatly astonished at the forbidding appearance of the house.

"No; but we can converse here, without fear of interruption."

Orpha hesitated, and for a moment a suspicion of foul play crossed her mind. She had read accounts of young girls being lured into obscure streets and treacherously made away with. Some danger to herself might linger within this old house. But what danger? Was she growing childish? What had she to apprehend? The weak, vacillating man beside her was incapable of any desperate villainy. She shook off the thought as unworthy of her, and fearlessly followed Wilner into the house.

It is always the best policy to listen to the whisperings of apprehension. The soul has an instinctive sensitiveness that warns it of coming danger, as the flowers close their petals at the approach of darkness. Orpha discovered this when too late to retreat. Wilner led the way up one flight of stairs—the steps worn into hollows by the tread of innumerable footsteps, and opened a door on the landing.

"In here," he said, and held the door open for her to enter.

She did so, but he did not follow her. The door closed sharply after, and she heard the click of a key turning in the lock. She bounded suddenly to the door, and, grasping the handle, tried with all her strength to wrench it open. In vain. It defied her every effort. She was a prisoner! She heard a mocking laugh without, and knew that Wilner was

exulting at the success of the scheme by which she had been secured.

"I have been very foolish," thought Orpha, as she realized how completely she had been ensnared. A thought, by the way, which is very mortifying to one's vanity, and not consoling under any circumstances. "I have placed myself in the power of these men—for I can trace the handiwork of Lathrop Moneymen in this device, too deep for the weak brain of my false husband; and now they can pursue their scheme against Samuela's fortune uninterruptedly. What can I do? Escape?"

She looked around her. The room was small, with two windows. The shutters (not the green blinds of modern date, but the old-fashioned broad ones) were closed, and securely nailed to cross-bars. A round hole was cut in the top of each, through which the light was admitted, without affording any opportunity of looking out. There was no escape in that direction.

Pursuing her investigations, she beheld another door opposite the one by which she had entered recently. Pushing it open, she discovered that it led into a smaller room or closet, in which was a low cot bedstead, made up and prepared for occupancy. This and an old deal table, two rickety chairs, a small washstand, a cracked bowl and pitcher, and a small looking-glass, hanging awry from a nail driven in the wall, constituted the furniture of the apartment.

It was very evident that she was in an old house that had not been occupied, except by the rats, for some time, and that this chamber had been prepared expressly for her reception. Having made this discovery, Orpha sat down to reflect. In which posture of her affairs was she must leave her.

After having succeeded so well in Thurston Follansbee's scheme for entrapping Orpha, Wilner thought, as it was so handy, that he would step into Mother Cyp's and smoke a cigar.

After a little conversation with Mother Cyp, whom he found behind the counter, and hearing from her that a couple of gentlemen were in the little parlour, and that one of them was his old friend, Byron Scrub, he resolved to go in and smoke a cigar with him.

He found Scrub with a swarthy, black-bearded man about his own size; but, engaged in greeting Byron, he did not bestow much attention upon him. He invited Scrub to join him in a fresh cigar, and then passed the box to his friend, with a "join us, sir?" which the other did without hesitation.

Byron's friend lighted a match and held it towards Wilner, saying—"Have a light?" Attracted by the tones of a voice which sounded strangely familiar, Wilner turned and saw the stranger's face, fully illuminated by the blaze of the burning match which he held.

"My God!" he gasped. "Can it be possible? Percy?"

His limbs suddenly seemed to fail him, the cigar dropped from his nerveless fingers, he staggered to a chair and sank helplessly into it, gazing with staring eyeballs and blank astonishment upon the apparition of one he had never thought to look upon again with mortal eyes—morally, physically prostrated.

"Leave us, Byron," said Percy Carsten, to his friend, significantly. "I wish to have a little conversation with my brother."

Byron was not slow of comprehension, so without asking a question, he quietly withdrew, knowing that all would be explained in his next meeting with Percy.

"You do not appear to be rejoiced at seeing me, Wilner," began Percy, when they were alone together. "Or is your joy so great at this unexpected meeting that you cannot find words to express it?" There was an almost imperceptible tinge of irony in the question.

"I thought you dead!" stammered Wilner. He could scarcely yet believe the evidence of his own senses.

"You see I am still alive—whatever reports you may have heard to the contrary," returned Percy, pleasantly. It almost appeared as if he enjoyed the consternation of his brother. "Dear me!" he continued, "you have dropped your cigar." He picked it up and handed it to Wilner. "Let us smoke while we converse."

He ignited another match and passed it to Wilner, who received it with fingers that were as tremulous as a leaf shaken by the wind. His agitation was so great, that the match burnt out whilst he endeavoured to light his cigar, without his attaining his object.

"Light from mine," observed Percy, quietly noticing his failure. "I see you have not outgrown your nervousness. You smoke too much, is it not so? I have heard doctors say that smoking was bad for the nerves."

"I don't know," answered Wilner, puffing away mechanically. He blew out great volumes of smoke, and behind this vapour mask he endeavoured to conceal his features—for he knew the tales they were

telling—and marshal into some kind of order the thoughts that were crowding tumultuously in his brain. But the effort was a vain one. The shock had come upon him so suddenly—he was so ill-prepared to meet it—that it struck him down like a thunder-stroke, leaving him dazed, bewildered, his mind a chaos. He was like one at sea, in the midst of storm and darkness—no pilot near, no star to steer by, overwhelmed by the sense of danger, from which there was no escape.

"When did you return?" he asked, after a long pause, in which both had smoked as if that was their sole object in life.

"A few days since. I arrived quietly, unexpectedly, and was rather astonished to find my name assumed by some person, who, doubtless, thought to profit by the report of my death, which he had taken for granted to be true. I did not stop to consider who or what he might be, for my appearance would at once put an end to his schemes. I had another anxiety—a brother—my only near relation; for whom, notwithstanding his faults, and they were many, I cherished a deep and lasting affection. I concealed my arrival from all but one tried friend, in whom I knew I could rely—Byron Scrub—and commenced my researches. Judge of my astonishment when I discovered that this loved brother and the impostor who had assumed my name was one and the same person. Then I knew at once that he had fallen into the hands of designing men, who, taking advantage of the strong resemblance which exists between us, had made him the tool in some dark scheme of fraud."

"Show me mercy! do not expose me!" cried Wilner, casting away his cigar, "and I will reveal all. I have been weak—left only an abject annuity, and steeped to the eyes in debt, accustomed to luxury—I could not resist the temptation of being rich. But, I swear to you! had I not firmly believed you to be dead, I would never have been persuaded—for I was persuaded into this scheme."

"I do believe you. Vicious as you have become by evil associations, I do not think you would conspire to rob a brother whose purse was always at your command. There needs no oath to assure me of that. You would have known that you would have lost nothing by trusting to my generosity, and that, on my return, although the act would have been almost enough to have brought the angry spirit of our father back to earth, I would have bestowed on you that portion of his wealth which I consider to be your just due."

"Percy!"

He could say no more. The tears gushed from his eyes, and he hid his shame-bowed head upon the table.

Percy regarded him a few moments in silence. He had brought him to the proper mood, and he did not despair of moulding him to his wishes, and working his reformation even at the eleventh hour.

Percy's love deceived him—blinded his keen judgment so that he could not see in Wilner, as he would have done in another, how deeply the roots of vice were planted in this young man's bosom, how thoroughly abject his soul had grown, until baseness had become a second nature.

No wonder Percy was deceived, for Wilner was deceived himself.

He really, truly felt the deep remorse his words and looks expressed.

He inwardly resolved to tell Percy all, expose his vile associates, and renounce his evil courses.

His good angel in that hour hovered over his head, pluming her snowy wings as if about to settle.

But it is so easy to make good resolves, as easy as to break them.

How long would it be before that angel, so persevering and so patient, would grow tired of the hopeless task, and fly despairingly heavenward, to return no more?

In a few broken, disjointed sentences, Wilner told Percy all—the names of his associates, their scheme, and all its bearings.

What cared he if they were punished, so long as he escaped?

Even in this moment of returning virtue, his own innate selfishness would appear.

The scheme had been ostensibly for his good; they, to the best of his knowledge, had been true to him.

It was a fair bargain between them, and they had borne all the expense and shared the risk, for a certain portion (the lion's share, it is true) of the spoils; and in making terms for himself, he should, in common justice, adopt the motto of the fraternity, "Honour among thieves," have screened them also.

But Wilner's soul was not large enough to hold any other image than his own.

"Weak as ever," said Percy, when Wilner had made a clean breast of it. "Brother, will you never have any mind of your own? But I must get you out of this scrape as easily as possible. There must be no

public exposure—our family name must not be blazoned in the newspapers in connection with a scandal, to amuse a gaping world. The affair must be managed cautiously—quietly!"

"Do whatever you will. I will obey you like a child," answered Wilner.

A child, indeed, and to be trusted as little as a child, thought Percy. But he did not give expression to that thought. There was no need of bitter taunts.

"This is my idea," he said, "and I think it the best we can adopt. You will go to your associates and tell them that you have seen me and can proceed no further in the affair. For their own sakes they will remain quiet, we need have no fear of them. Then you will inform Mr. Goldschmidt that unexpected business will call you from the city for a month. You will join me here, and we will depart together on a pleasure trip to the watering places. Our first stop will enable you to shave that beard; and, by the way, how happens it that you have been enabled to raise so much—the hair used to grow very lightly there?"

"It is false," returned Wilner, laughing. "I knew you always wore a beard, and so I adopted it to make the resemblance stronger."

"In that case there will be no difficulty in getting rid of it. To resume: we will depart together—he absent a month—and return together. My face will then have lost some of its swarthy glow, and your face being smooth, and mine bearded, who will be able to say that I was not the Percy you represented? and thus will your cheat be hid for ever from the world."

"You've got a great head, Percy!" exclaimed Wilner. "Father always said you had all the sense."

"I think the plan will work. Go now; and meet me here, at the same hour, to-morrow."

Without further conversation, the brothers parted.

(To be continued.)

THE MORNING.—Happy is the man who is an early riser. Every morning day comes to him with a virgin's love, full of bloom and purity and freshness. The youth of nature is contagious, like the gladness of a happy child. We doubt if any man can be called old so long as he is an early riser and an early walker. And (oh, youth!) take our word for it) youth in dressing-gown and slippers, dawdling over breakfast at noon, is a very decrepit, ghastly image of that youth which sees the sun blush over the mountains, and the dew sparkling upon blossoming hedgerows.

A NEW NAVAL FLAG.—The Swiss flag will shortly be seen at sea. At first sight this fact may appear strange, as Switzerland has no ports, and as yet possesses no colonies. The following decree of the Federal Assembly will, however, furnish an explanation of the matter:—"Considering the petitions of a large number of Swiss citizens domiciled at Trieste, Smyrna, and St. Petersburg, and the message of the Federal Council of the 25th November, 1864, the Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation decrees:—1. The Federal Council is authorised to permit the use at sea of the Swiss flag for Swiss vessels. 2. Until an anterior decision of the Federal Assembly, the Federal Council hereby receives full powers to adopt the necessary measures for the execution of the present decree." This is the first instance of such a proceeding.

THE FRENCH GRAPE HARVEST.—A traveller who has closely watched the progress of the vintage through France is of opinion that the present will rank among the best years. Such a good result was not expected in the month of August last. At that time the grapes had become hard in some places for want of rain, and in others they were scorched with the extreme heat. Fortunately, in the middle of September, a beneficial rain fell, which brought moisture into the veins of the plant. As the rain was prolonged the fears of the vine-dressers were again roused, and some of them gathered their grapes between two showers, fearing they would be washed away. "Quantity," said they, "is sufficient for us, for nobody can expect good quality this year." Contrary to their prediction, however, the rain ceased on the 22nd of September, and an east wind set in, with a bright sun. A complete transformation took place in the vineyards. The grapes that were shrivelled became full, and those that were green ripened in 24 hours. Hands were wanting to gather the grapes, and much would have been lost had not the commanders of regiments lent their men to assist the vine-dressers; and it was at that moment that the journeymen-coopers struck for higher wages. The traveller was present at the making of the wine in the Medoc, and says the grapes are never pressed, except to make the wine used in the family, after the juice has run into a vat over which the grapes are placed. He describes the magnificent wine-cellars at Bordeaux, on the Quay des Chartres, which are galleries lighted with gas, through which one may walk or drive amid 10,000 casks and 500,000 bottles of

the best wines in the department. The cellars of the wine-growers are not so extensive, being only formed to receive the produce of two crops. Sometimes it is a marquis or an earl who does the honour to a visitor, but the majority of the wine-growers leave that duty to be performed by their head cellarman, a person who possesses the same faith in his master's wine as he does in his religion, and is anxious in the care of his casks as he is in that of his children.

STRAY NOTES ON FLOWERS.

WHEN winter is well established, and out-of-door flowers are rare, then comes the time when people wish they had some in-doors. There is something very pleasant in anticipating the spring, and in seeing sweet spring flowers blossoming in our windows in advance of those outside. I was reminded of this day by a visit to a seed shop in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. I had been moving about, and had seen few bulbs indeed, but there I found they had such really charming arrangements—not things that one calls "shoppy," but really well arranged and coming on for bloom. There was the rustic robin, of which I made trial last year, a most luxuriant mass of hyacinths and crocuses, and snowdrops, and I think tulips, making such a pile of beautiful sweet flowers, giving so little trouble, asking only for light and water, and then lasting such a time.

Another plan there is for growing things in tiers; this is a jardinet, called after the Prince of Wales. This I have not yet seen in flower, but it promises to be beautiful. The rough wood-like single flower-pots never are very attractive to my particular taste, because for plants in rooms more finished things seem more suitable; but even these for conservatories, often look very well.

The large rustic things, however, seem quite free from that defect. They stand more as single objects. Besides these, there are well finished dark-red terracotta flower pots of exquisite colour and texture, which would be quite perfect for standing in the deep windows and recesses of Gothic houses.

These pots, with some large white flower—a lily for example—or else with tall white hyacinths, or with spreading ferns, would look beautiful. I mention these things now, because now is the time for having them, and yet it is perhaps a time when few people chance to be reminded of them by seeing them. And also it is pleasant to be able to make up for lost time, and to get bulbs ready growing, when we have failed to plant them.

I saw, too, at Covent Garden, some such lovely table baskets or tins, planted with red poinsettias, and white pink-touched heaths and tulips.

It struck me that three of these would be so perfect for the dinner-table—one red and white say, and two white and red, or vice versa, the centre plant being dominant, and making a real difference, though it does not sound so.

I took the precaution of asking if groups such as these could be packed and sent down safely anywhere, and was told that they could be, and that the cost of the three would be from a guinea to 8s.

A more really charming ornament I could not recommend for Christmas time; and though, indeed, the poinsettias require heat to grow in, the heaths will last for many weeks in beauty if carefully soaked—not merely watered—and then let drain sufficiently.

A few weeks ago I mentioned some pretty rustic stands for holding small knots of cut flowers; and as many people seemed interested about them, I have sent one of my own to Mr. Hammond's, Baker Street, to be copied. It can be seen there any time for the next two or three weeks; but when seen without flowers, it does not look attractive; so people must imagine little red and yellow groups lighting it. Christmas roses and fir look well in it, and the red anemones and primroses will do charmingly.

E. A. M.

A FLYING FOE.—Two farmers were crossing their fields, beguiling the way with friendly conversation. One of them, a powerful man, six feet in height, received a blow on the left temple from some invisible agent, which laid him prostrate on the ground, insensible. His companion had neither seen nor heard any one approach, and yet the sound of the blow which struck his friend to the earth fell distinctly on his ear. In utter amazement, he lifted him up, and in a very short time the poor fellow regained his senses, and inquired of his comrade if he had not seen the lightning. But he had seen no lightning, neither did he believe there had been any. The pain caused by the stroke was severe, but it gave less uneasiness than his anxiety to know how the sufferer had received it. Neither, however, could conceive a feasible method of accounting for the difficulty, and they proceeded to move on, when one of them felt something before his

feet, and stooping down, took up a large and beautiful partridge. The whole mystery was unravelled—it was evident that the bird, scared from its haunt, had, in its eager flight, dashed against the head of the tall carter; and, while guilty of a serious, though unintentional, assault, had, unfortunately, paid a severe penalty in the loss of the life it was trying to save. An enemy to capital punishment asks:—In what situation would the survivor have been had the blow, thus extraordinarily inflicted, proved fatal? Would a candid account of the occurrence, and the production of the partridge in proof of its veracity, have been looked upon as anything else than a story, concocted, with no great ingenuity, to cloak an act of passion, deep-seated hatred?

THE GOLD WATCH OR, THE DECREE OF FATE.

CHAPTER I.

"Here is an advertisement, describing a situation which, I think, will just suit me," said Clara Hildreth, addressing Mrs. Borden. "Shall I read it to you?"

"Do," replied Mrs. Borden.

And Clara read as follows:

"Wanted.—A young woman qualified to teach the primary branches in English, also to give lessons in drawing, may find an eligible situation in a family residing in Yorkshire. A line addressed to G. Williams, Post-office, York, if accompanied with satisfactory recommendations, will receive immediate attention."

"Don't you think that I had better answer it without delay?" inquired Clara, when she had finished reading it.

"I don't know but that it may be best," replied Mrs. Borden, "seeing that necessity compels you to do something for a livelihood; yet it seems hard that you should be obliged to wear your life out in the onerous and exhausting employment of a teacher, when you ought to be in the enjoyment of the rank and privilege due to the eldest daughter of one of the wealthiest gentlemen in the country."

"Do I rightly understand that my mother at the time of her decease was a widow?"

"That was an inference naturally derived from the few circumstances you were acquainted with. I am not certain that it was judicious to so long withhold from you a full explanation of those incidents which induced your mother to seek a home with me several months prior to your birth. I have acted, however, in compliance with her wishes, for she dreaded that a full disclosure might cause you to feel discontented with your humble lot."

"As you are now compelled to leave the secluded spot where you have spent twenty years of your life, and may by some chance come in contact with some of your paternal relations—possibly even with your father himself—I think it best that you should know all—that is, all that I am able to tell you."

"Your parents were very young at the time of their clandestine marriage—your father being scarce twenty, your mother only sixteen. Had the secret transpired, it would have caused your father to be disdained. As the best means of preventing its discovery, your mother, who was an orphan, left the roof of her guardian, and sought a home with me. The seclusion of my dwelling and its great distance from her former abode, alone influenced her in her choice, for though we soon became warm friends, we were then entire strangers to each other."

"As a parting interview, which your parents had anticipated, was prevented by some adverse circumstance, the name your mother was to assume was not agreed upon between them."

"She, however, in a letter which she wrote her husband immediately after her arrival, informed him that for the present, she had assumed the name of Smith, and requested him to inform her, when he wrote, if there was any other which he should prefer. She received no answer to this letter, neither to a second. To a third, which she wrote him soon after you were born, she received a reply."

"Though he assured her of his unalterable affection, and expressed a hope to be able at some future time to acknowledge her as his wife, there was something in the style of the letter that seemed forced and artificial."

"Your mother perceived this, and while she saw the futility of trusting to the continuance of an affection already chilled and drooping, she saw the still greater vanity of trusting to the fulfilment of an event, thrust so far forward into the dim uncertain future."

"The only part of his letter which bore the stamp of fervour or sincerity, was where he conjured her to be discreet, and guard the secret of their marriage as

she would her own life and the lives of those she held dearest."

"An unguarded word or look even," said he, "may be death to my hopes. I tremble, lest by some fortuitous disclosure, I shall be cast penniless upon the world. It will, therefore, be prudent for us to abstain from writing to each other frequently on your account as well as mine."

"He addressed her as Mrs. Mary Smith, and said nothing relative to her exchanging that name for some other. Your mother, who was proud and high-spirited, could not brook the idea of being regarded by him as liable at any moment, by some unforeseen event, to be the means of marring his fortunes. She therefore determined to owe him nothing. My removal to this place, still more secluded than where I then lived, favoured her resolution. She accompanied me, and exchanged the name of Smith for that of Hildreth. She was able by her industry to maintain herself and you, and thus save a few pounds untouched, with which she intended to defray the expenses of your education. She did not live to see this done, but the sum, considerably augmented by having been safely invested, has, to the best of my ability, been appropriated to the accomplishment of her purpose."

"For which I am afraid that I have made but a poor return," said Clara. "The manner in which you have accomplished my mother's wishes has my warmest thanks. I think I can understand and appreciate the feelings which actuated her. Her pride, founded on self-respect, which induced her to renounce the assistance of one who evidently regarded her as a burden, affords me an example worthy of imitation. But what was my father's name? You have not told me that yet."

"Hawthorne. Thomas Hawthorne."

"And do you know if he still lives?"

"He does. He must, by some means, have ascertained that your mother was dead, as soon afterward, he married a second wife, and has, I have understood, a number of children."

"Where does he live?"

"Somewhere in Yorkshire, I believe."

"Why, that is where the family reside who have advertised for a governess," said Clara, changing colour.

"True, but Yorkshire is large enough to hold a great many families besides Mr. Hawthorne's," said Mrs. Borden, smiling.

CHAPTER II.

A LETTER, bearing testimony to Clara's irreproachable moral character, as well as her possessing the qualifications to teach all that was named in the advertisement, was voluntarily written by a gentleman of the first respectability. Having obtained several signatures besides his own, he forwarded it according to directions. An answer was soon received from Mr. Williams, saying that the gentleman who wished to obtain Miss Hildreth as a governess, was satisfied with the statement contained in the letter, and would like her to come immediately. Clara, therefore, made the necessary preparations for her departure.

Mr. Williams had, by some oversight, omitted to mention the name of the family that required her services, but the description he gave of their residence, with respect to situation and other particulars, together with directions relative to her journey, was so explicit that she was put to no inconvenience.

It was about sunset the day that the hired conveyance stopped opposite the entrance of a winding avenue, shaded with elms, through whose graceful foliage were seen the glimpses of a fine old mansion.

"That is where Mr. Hawthorne lives," said the driver, addressing Clara, as he let down the steps.

"Mr. Hawthorne," she repeated, involuntarily.

"Yes," he replied, "there is no other house such as you described within a dozen miles of here. Here, too, is a servant ready to take your luggage."

A moment's reflection soothed her agitation.

"There are others of the name of Hawthorne," said she, mentally, "besides my father" and the thought that she might now be about to enter his presence, which at hearing the name pronounced had flashed across her mind, was abandoned.

Clara arrived at the right time to see the whole family together.

Mr. Hawthorne, a very handsome man of about forty, scanned her features with one of those quick, searching glances which reads more and deeper than can be done by an hour of careless attention.

Clara's eyes drooped so quickly beneath the gaze of his, that she had no opportunity to mark the almost purple flush that crossed his brow. Neither did any one else observe it, for it came and was gone almost in the same instant.

Mrs. Hawthorne was a beautiful woman, but there was a haughtiness in her demeanour which made Clara at once sensible of the wide barrier she intended

to place between them, and made her sigh for the humble home she had left.

There were three daughters, the eldest a lovely girl of fifteen, whose name was Amelia, one seven years younger, who was considered very plain by the whole family, and whose name was Isabel, and little Ellen.

Ellen, who was about four, was a little rose-lipped Hebe, with a profusion of golden curls, and before five minutes had passed, sidled up to Clara, and with a smile placed a sprig of yellow jessamine on her lap.

But the one, who above all the rest, with the exception of Mr. Hawthorne, attracted Clara's attention, was Fembroke Hawthorne, who was an only son.

He was scarce seventeen, though he had the appearance of being several years older, and in his countenance was combined all that was most attractive in the features of both parents, with few of the defects. His had none of the peculiar look which an iron will may stamp—lightly, it is true—even upon youthful features, and which was the strongest characteristic of his father's; and they possessed still less of the haughtiness and forbidding coldness which marred the almost faultless beauty of his mother's. He was in truth, as Clara inferred from his appearance, possessed of many generous and noble qualities, but he was of too ardent a temperament, and might probably have been more readily influenced by the persuasion and example of others, than most persons, even of his immature age.

Clara retired at an early hour to her own room, and too much excited to wish to sleep or even to feel fatigued by her journey, commenced unpacking her trunk.

In doing this she came across what appeared to be a miniature-case, which unknown to her had been placed there by Mrs. Borden.

As she opened the case, her thoughts were busy in conjecturing whose miniature it contained.

A single glance of it thrilled every nerve, for though it represented a young man, the resemblance it bore to Mr. Hawthorne was so striking, that she could not, for a moment, doubt that he was the original.

Had any doubt existed, it would have been removed by finding the name, "Thomas Hawthorne," inscribed on the back of it.

During the first moments of this discovery the affections of her heart gained the ascendancy over every other consideration, and had she then been in her father's presence, she would without stopping to calmly calculate the probable consequences, have revealed herself; but during the weary hours of a sleepless night, she had time for reflection, and she said to herself:

"Were I to claim his notice, he would regard me with coldness, if not distrust; and even were he compelled to acknowledge me, he would consider me as invading the rights of his other children, who might scorn to call me sister. I will neither claim his bounty nor appeal to his affection, since they were both withheld when I most needed them. I will be cold and distant to them all—even to little Ellen—who gave me the sprig of jessamine."

Clara found, however, that the resolution was more easily adopted than kept.

When Ellen met her in the morning, her eyes full of sunshine, and a whole swarm of dimples playing about the corners of her red lips, as she raised her face to hers to claim and give a kiss, she scarce forbore uttering the words: "My dear sister!" as she knelt on the carpet, and clasped her in her arms.

Fembroke, too, met her with smiles, and a cheerful "good-morning!" and there was more heartiness in the morning salutation of Mr. Hawthorne than she had anticipated, judging from the inflexibility of his countenance.

The eldest daughter was at times disposed to be hasty and impulsive, in imitation of her mother's example, though, generally speaking, she was far from assuming any such foolish air.

Isabel appeared to be an object of no great interest to anyone, except little Ellen, whose heart was so full of the warm and benevolent affections that it would have been a hard thing for her not to love an own sister, even if she was not handsome.

Isabel fully returned her affection, thankful for an opportunity to lavish the hoarded love of her heart where it would not be received with indifference and repelled with scorn.

Though at first very shy of Clara—for a late governess, taking her tone from the family, had treated her with little indulgence—she soon learned to love her with her whole heart.

Fembroke, as if drawn towards her by some secret and irresistible influence, soon treated her with all the confidence he would have shown to an elder sister, little suspecting that he was really bound to her by the ties of kindred.

Her own knowledge of this circumstance led her to treat him with much less reserve than she otherwise

would have done; and as the seclusion to which he lived precluded him from familiarly associating with young persons of his own sex and rank, he was in the habit of joining her in her walks, or whenever he found her sufficiently at leisure to be able to converse with him.

CHAPTER III.

"PEMBROKE," said Mr. Hawthorne, one day, addressing his son, "I have just received a letter which will oblige me to start in the morning for London. A note of one hundred pounds in favour of Mr. Harmer becomes due to-morrow, and I wish you would ride over and pay it, and mind and be careful to take a receipt. You will find the money in my writing-desk."

Pembroke promised compliance, and taking the key of the desk which his father handed him, he put it into his pocket.

Mr. Hawthorne then sent for Clara, and paid her that part of her salary which had become due, amounting to twenty-seven pounds.

The next morning, when Pembroke went to the desk for the money, he perceived his father's watch, which was a very valuable one, lying on a table. He had just received the intelligence that several very stylish young men, from London, had recently arrived at Mr. Harmer's; and, assailed by a sudden feeling of vanity, he removed his own watch from his pocket, which was of trifling value, and replaced it by the splendid gold one belonging to his father. It was fifteen miles to Mr. Harmer's, and when he arrived there he found that he was absent.

The stylish young gentlemen, however, whom he had heard about, were there, and he warmly congratulated himself on having exchanged watches, when one of them courteously inquired of him the time of day, remarking that he believed all the watches there were too fast.

"We were amusing ourselves with dice, when you arrived," said the gentleman whose mind had been set easy with regard to the time of day, "will you join us?" Pembroke declined, alleging his entire ignorance of all games of chance, as well as his decided disapprobation of them.

"Oh," said one of them whose name was Leechley, "the stakes we play for are merely nominal, our object being amusement rather than gain, and the loss of such trifling sums can injure no one."

The others now joined their persuasions to Leechley's, and Pembroke, more from seeing in them disposition to ridicule his scruples than from any inclination to play, was at length induced to comply.

He soon parted with all the money he had about him, except the hundred pounds with which he was to pay Mr. Harmer, when he declined playing any longer though impertinent to do so by the others.

"As it is all luck and chance," said one of them, "You treat yourself unfairly in not trying to win back what you have lost."

Pembroke, already considerably excited, was easily prevailed upon to throw again.

This time he won, and as the stakes had been greatly increased, he found nearly all that he had lost back again in his pocket.

He now entered eagerly into the spirit of the game, but Fortune again turned against him.

Urged on, however, by the hope of winning, he continued to play till he had lost one hundred pounds more than he had money of his own to pay.

"Your watch is good for that sum," said Leechley.

Pembroke was ashamed to say it belonged to his father, and while he was hesitating whether to give up the watch or the money intended for Mr. Harmer, one of them remarked that they should remain in the place a week or ten days, and if he chose he might redeem it in that time. This decided him to part with the watch, for although he knew of no way to raise a hundred pounds by which to redeem it, still he thought there was a possibility that he might. He paid Mr. Harmer, who soon afterwards arrived, and then, with a heavy heart, started for home. His father had furnished him with his usual quarterly allowance of spending-money some time previous, and all that remained of it, he unfortunately had had with him, and therefore lost. As it would be a number of weeks before the next quarter came round, all hope was cut off from receiving anything from his father, even should he return in season, which was very improbable. To add to his distress he received the subjoined note from his father:

"DEAR PEMBROKE.—You will find a watch lying on the table in my office, which I have reasons for valuing much above its price, which I wish you to remove to the fireproof safe, as by some strange forgetfulness I forgot to place it there myself before I left home."

The moment he read this note, he ordered his horse, and rode with furious speed in the direction of Mr. Harmer's.

He met Leechley and one of his companions a short distance from the house.

As he suddenly reined in his horse, his eye caught the gleam of a ruby seal which was attached to the watch he had lost, somewhat ostentatiously displayed by Leechley.

The object of Pembroke, when he left home, was to attempt to persuade him to return the watch, and to accept his note for one hundred pounds in its stead, but the cold sneer on the gamester's lip, who read Pembroke's errand in his wild and excited countenance, told him it would be useless.

He, however, gathered courage, and requested the watch to be restored on the condition we have named.

"You are a minor, I believe," said Leechley, in reply, "therefore your note would be of no value in any case."

"My sense of honour would make it valuable in every case," said Pembroke, warmly.

"Nothing more likely," said Leechley, with an air of irony, "yet after all, 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' Bring me a hundred and twenty-five pounds any time within eight days and the watch shall be restored."

"I understand," said Pembroke, "that a hundred pounds would redeem it."

"It is nothing more than fair," said Leechley, "that I should receive something for my trouble, especially as I should prefer to retain the watch rather than to exchange it for a larger sum than I named."

"Where is Mr. Harmer?" said Pembroke. "I will appeal to him."

"But I will not," said Leechley. "I can settle my own affairs without an arbiter."

Indignant with himself for having stooped so low as to ask a favour of one equally destitute of heart or principle, without saying another word, he turned his horse homeward.

He was several hours on the road, for he suffered his horse to take his own humour, which led him frequently to stop and crop the grass and herbage which bordered the forest-path, which Pembroke had chosen in preference to the high road. It was late when he arrived home, and as he hurriedly crossed the hall on his way to his own room, his mother called to him.

"Pembroke," said she, "you are growing much too irregular in your hours. We dined full two hours ago, and the table has been kept waiting for you ever since."

"I wish for no dinner," he replied, and hastened on to his room.

CHAPTER IV.

CLARA was in the habit of taking a ramble in the woods and fields about sunset, generally taking Isabel and Ellen with her; but to-day they were busy with their toys, which gave her an opportunity to extend her walk beyond its usual limits.

As she entered a dimly defined forest-path, the wind, which began to freshen as the day drew to a close, sounded like the echoes of distant music as it swept through the oaks and chestnuts which towered in primeval majesty.

As she passed on, another sound like the murmuring of waters blended with the dreamy music of the wind, and in a few moments she found herself in a gloomy, weird-like spot, such as fancy might select for a Druid's shrine.

A stream of water was sluggishly welling from a dark hollow amid a ledge of rocks, over which, depending from the branches of an aged oak, were fantastic wreaths of moss and tangled masses of wild vines.

She started as she drew near the oak, for seated on one of its roots, which wound like a huge serpent beneath the emerald moss, was Pembroke Hawthorne. His face was buried in his hands, and he had not heard her approach.

She drew near where he sat, and laid her hand on his arm.

"Ah! Miss Hildreth," said he, starting, and making a faint effort to smile, "is it you? I could hardly have expected that you would wander to this solitary place."

"The voice of this dark stream attracted me," said she, "and I am glad that it did, for I wish to speak with you alone."

Pembroke made no reply, but regarded her with a look which seemed to ask her why.

"You have," said she, "ever since your ride a few mornings since, appeared agitated and unhappy. Do not think me presuming, if I ask if it is occasioned by anything which will admit of alleviation. Sometimes, even so poor a thing as sympathy may not be entirely worthless."

"Your sympathy could never be worthless," he replied, "at least to me. I only regret that I do not at this time deserve it."

"Perhaps," said she, "I may be able to confer some thing more substantial than sympathy."

"No," said he, "I have been guilty of gross impiety and folly, to make use of the mildest terms, and I must reap the bitter fruits, which, for ought I know may be banishment from my father's roof, for he is not a person to pardon what I have been guilty of. My mother would, I am afraid, be still less lenient. Even you will think me very vain, and weak, and guilty, yet, as the only person who I am confident will not upbraid me, I will tell you all."

He then, without either endeavouring to palliate his vanity in exchanging his own watch for the costly one of his father's, or his subsequent weakness in yielding to the temptation of hazarding what was not his own gave Clara a full account of all the circumstances.

"I can save you," said Clara, joyfully, as he concluded his rapid narration. "Your father paid me the morning he left home, which, with the addition of the money I brought with me, will release the watch."

"And do you think that I am mean enough to accept what you have earned at the price of so much toil, to say nothing of censure and blame often so unscrupulously lavished for others faults rather than your own?"

"If you will accept it, I shall be more than repaid for all you allude to."

"Do not urge me," said he; "I must not add the sin of meanness to what I am already guilty of."

"If," said Clara, "you hesitate to receive it from your sisters' governess, accept it from your sister."

"I, indeed, have reason to regard you as a sister," said he, "and I do, as a very dear one. To be allowed so to consider you is a privilege which I shall ever fondly prize. Let me not, then, to a further extent than what I have already done, forfeit my claims to your sisterly regard to esteem."

"Nothing can at least destroy your claims to my affection," said she. "Pembroke, you do not rightly understand me. I am your real sister—your father's daughter by a former marriage. I did not intend to disclose this to you or any other person at present; but, as you need sympathy and assistance, you certainly cannot refuse them of a sister."

"I knew something of this, dear Clara," said Pembroke, with a brightening countenance. "I do not mean that I knew anything of the tie that unites us; but by the accidental sight of a paper, not intended for my eye, I knew that my father had a wife and a child previous to his marriage with my mother. I thought however, that they were both dead. Come sit by me," he added, taking her hands within his and gently drawing her down upon the lowly seat he still continued to occupy, "and tell me all about it."

A low rustling sound, which seemed to proceed from behind the tangled curtain of moss and vines, which drooped quite to the ground, attracted Clara's attention.

"The particulars I am about to relate," said she, lowering her voice, "are for your ear only, and I would not willingly have any other listener."

"There can be no person near," he replied, "for this is too wild a spot to attract either my mother or Amelia, or any of the servants."

Clara, however, in relating the few incidents respecting her parents which she herself knew, did not forget the precaution of speaking in a suppressed voice.

Pembroke, whose generous and affectionate impulses were all aroused, urged her to disclose herself to their father.

"Though stern he is just," said he, "and by claiming your birthright, you will, to say the least, throw off those trammels imposed by poverty, and secure to yourself a maintenance without being obliged to daily perform a task sufficiently ungrateful in itself, and made doubly oppressive by the caprice and fault-finding spirit of those who employ you."

But Clara firmly withheld all his arguments in favour of such procedure, at least for the present; for she feared that it might prove the means of sowing dissension between her father and the haughty lady he had chosen for a wife.

"If you are averse to telling him yourself," said Pembroke, "suffer me to inform him."

"No," she replied, "let us for the present preserve the secret between ourselves. And now, as a reward for the confidence I have reposed in you, will you not comply with my request? Do not, I beg of you, deny me; for if, as you say, reproach and disgrace await you, shall I not as your sister have the privilege of averting what must wound me as well as you?"

"Be it so then," said he, "though at present, I can see no way by which I can repay you."

"Your love is all the pay I ask or wish," said Clara. "I will find an opportunity to hand you the money this evening or early in the morning."

"My sister," said Pembroke, touching his lips to the cheeks of Clara, to which excitement had

parted a rich and vivid glow, "How proud should I be to acknowledge you before the world."

Drawing her arm within his, they now walked slowly homeward, the shades of twilight having deepened to evening by the time they reached the house. They met Mrs. Hawthorne at the entrance of the hall.

"In your father's absence," said she, addressing her son, "I should esteem it a privilege to be able to speak to you occasionally, if it will not interfere with the superior claims of Miss Hildreth."

"Miss Hildreth," he replied, "has had an little of my poor company as yourself since my father's absence, with the exception of about an hour since sunset, and which, I assure you, was entirely accidental."

"Quite accidental I dare say!" said Mrs. Hawthorne. "You will oblige me, however, to avoid to many such accidental meetings, as I do not care to have my daughters' governess wandering about after dark, even with so grave and honourable a personage as Mr. Pembroke Hawthorne."

Pembroke bit his lips till the blood came to prevent a somewhat indiscreet reply, and passed on to go to his chamber.

"You are becoming so sentimental and ethereal," said his mother, after calling him to return, "as to be able to live on air, I suppose; as you have eaten nothing since morning."

"I have not been well, and did not feel the need of eating," he replied, and returning he took some fruit from a basket on a side-table, and again started to go to his room.

Once more she sought to detain him, but distrusting his ability to control his temper so as to prevent saying anything that it would be better to leave unsaid, he begged her to excuse him. Clara, who heard his step on the stair, stood ready to hand him the money. "God bless you, my sweet sister," said he, pressing the hand from which he received it. "I am afraid we shall have few opportunities to meet, yet I will, if possible, see you to-morrow after I return, and inform you of my success."

Long before his mother rose, Pembroke was on his way to Mr. Harmer's. He succeeded in obtaining the watch, which was probably owing to the unexpected entrance of a person on the scene with a warrant to arrest Leechley and his companions, as before that still more had been demanded for its restoration than on the day preceding.

CHAPTER V.

At the close of two weeks, Mr. Hawthorne returned. He was in remarkably good spirits, for the enterprise which had called him from home had terminated successfully.

The golden curls of little Ellen, fell over his shoulder, who, emboldened by the cheering tones of his voice, ventured to nestle closely to his side as he threw himself on a luxurious lounge; and even the plain faulst was made glad by a few kind words, which, from their rarity, were treasured all the more kindly.

All this, however, was like the morning rainbow, ominous of storm rather than sunshine.

An hour afterwards Pembroke and Clara were summoned to a retired apartment, were were both Mr. and Mrs. Hawthorne.

The former, who was very pale, was rapidly walking the floor, and seemed struggling with some powerful emotion.

Pembroke could only suspect that the unfortunate affair about the watch had by some means come to his parents' ears, and that he was now arraigned for the purpose of receiving the reproof which he knew he merited.

Clara's suspicions likewise glanced that way, and she trembled at the thought of incurring blame for what she had done; yet she shrank less from the idea of receiving censure herself for the assistance she had rendered Pembroke than from that which he would incur for accepting it.

Mr. Hawthorne attempted once or twice to address his son, but each time broke abruptly off, as if he found it difficult to express himself in language which exactly suited him.

"There stands the one you should address," said Mrs. Hawthorne, turning to Clara. "You little imagined," continued she, addressing the trembling girl, "that when you were exhorting this very wise and prudent young man to preserve a certain important secret between yourselves, that there was one near who overheard both the secret and the exhortation. It is quite unnecessary," she added, seeing that Clara was about to speak, "for you to attempt to exculpate yourself; for, though my son was to blame for not turning with scorn and loathing from one who so boldly and unequivocally expressed a passion for him, his youth and inexperience may, in some measure,

parted a rich and vivid glow, "How proud should I be to acknowledge you before the world."

"I have been to blame in this more than they," said Mr. Hawthorne. "I might have foreseen that a lovely and fascinating girl, even if she were two or three years his senior, would be a dangerous object for a youth, generous and impressionable as Pembroke, to be in daily intercourse with."

"If," said Pembroke, "my mother imagines that I regard Miss Hildreth with sentiments different from those due to a sister worthy in every respect of a brother's love, I can only say that she is mistaken; on the other hand, I can say, with equal regard to the truth, that her affection for me is of the same nature, though I regret that it is far less worthily bestowed."

"And I regret," said his mother, "that the wealth of your fraternal affection is such that you are obliged to lavish it upon your sisters' governess. One might have imagined that a young gentleman who has three sisters would be under no such necessity."

"Miss Hildreth," said Pembroke, "it will be doing you injustice to any longer preserve the secret which you wished should remain between us."

"Stay," said his father; "I know what the secret is, and I am the one who should reveal it. Had I been generous, I should have done it before. Clara, you are my daughter. I knew that you were when I first saw you. For a moment, I almost imagined that the dead had risen, and that my first wife stood before me. Considerations unworthy myself deterred me from obeying the better and more generous impulses of my heart, and acknowledging you in the presence of my family. This," said he, turning to his wife, "should give you no pain, for at the commencement of our acquaintance, I told you that I had been married."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Hawthorne, "but you did not tell me that your daughter survived your wife. I always thought that they were both dead."

"I was led to believe that this was the case," said Mr. Hawthorne, "or I should have been more earnest in my inquiries relative to the orphan of my neglected wife."

"If you were ignorant of the existence of your daughter," said Mrs. Hawthorne, "she seems to have known that she had a father, and has, I confess, managed to introduce herself into our family with an adroitness which does her infinite credit as a manouver, however slight the claims which it may give her to delicacy and sincerity."

"I only wish that every period had as well-founded claims to them both," said Pembroke. "She did not even know the name of the family that required her services till she arrived here, my father's agent, by some strange oversight, having neglected to mention it."

"And when she became aware that she was beneath her father's roof, instead of making herself known to him and to me, as she should have done, she chose you for a confidant," said his mother.

"If she was silent on the subject to my father and to you," said Pembroke, "it was from reasons which might be readily apprehended. As for her making a confidant of me, it was from motives as unpremeditated as they were generous. It was to induce me to accept of a favour, which you cannot appreciate as I do, unless you know why she wished to confer it. I had hoped to conceal my weakness and my folly from my parents, but since by so doing I shall suffer a shade to rest on her who has so truly shown herself my sister, I will confess all."

He then related the manner in which he had yielded to temptation, and told them of the generosity of Clara, who so freely surrendered all she had received for weeks and months of toil, to enable him to redeem an article so highly valued by his father.

"Had it not been for her," said he, when he had finished his recital, "I don't know what I might have been left to do, for when I returned from Mr. Harmer's the second time, I was so excited that I was scarcely myself. I had in my mind, a vague, half-formed plan of returning once more and again trying my fortune with the dice, and if unsuccessful of leaving my home for ever. It was my sister that saved me."

Mr. Hawthorne, the errors of whose early life, within the last fifteen minutes had passed vividly before him, felt in no mood to reprove his son for what he felt sure he had repented of too sincerely to repeat. The feelings of Mrs. Hawthorne, too, underwent a change, when she found that her only son had approached the verge of ruin, and that he owed his preservation to the condemned and despised Clara. From that time Mr. Hawthorne acknowledged her as his daughter, and his wife had the good sense to suppress all unamiable feelings, and to permit her to enjoy the same privileges as Amelia.

C. O.

caravan, and upon credit, too. They applied to me to draw up in writing their cheques. I was surprised to find that the debtor, instead of handing over his signature to tranquillize his creditor, put it into his own pocket; and this was the Turkoman way of arranging the whole business. When I questioned the creditor as to this remarkable manner of procedure, his answer was, "What have I to do with the writing? The debtor must keep it by him as a reminder of his debt."—*Travels in Central Asia.*" By A. Vambery.

EDUCATION.

In treating of the importance and necessity of this prominent subject, it is necessary to place it under a careful and critical observation, to view its crowning glories with an observant eye, and seek to profit by its advantages. There are few persons, I think, who properly understand the true meaning of education; and, as it is requisite to my subject, I will give its correct definition.

Properly defined, education is the "comprehension of all the series of instruction and discipline which is intended to correct and form the habits of an individual." This branch may, however, have a still higher elevation, and also imply that it includes knowledge of the highest degree. Education is refinement, and refinement is the keystone to advancement; therefore all the advancements and prosperities which are carried into execution by a nation may be styled her enlightenment. The world's advancement to-day she owes to her illustrious philosophers, who introduced the many arts which lay concealed from view until they, the models of refinement and education, disclosed them to the view of all. The world rewards these renowned men with her universal praise, and their names are placed upon the mount of glory, for ever to shine like the mariner's star.

The well educated man not only outwardly exhibits a look of intellect, but his actions are ready at all times to prove his outward assertion. His mouth does not utter that which is unbecoming to one of his station, neither does he advance subjects of a low or demoralizing nature, but his mind is open at all times to pure, exhaustless subjects, which when expressed, fills the soul of an individual with rapture. Governed entirely by his own intellect, he fears not the useless slurs which are cast upon him by those envious individuals who seek to ruin his reputation. Envy and malice find no place in his breast, but he is ready at all times to help the needful and supply others with unlimited knowledge. In society he is the hero and pride of their circle, where, advancing subjects that are interesting and useful, he is rewarded with their esteem.

The means of obtaining an education are not always placed within a person's grasp, but by a steady application to study and a devoted mind he may finally, after many struggles, obtain it; though disappointment meet him at every gate, and his almost vain efforts are crushed, he has but to gaze upon the examples of the illustrious men who were his predecessors, and proceed with his study.

Newton, one of the greatest philosophers that ever faced the world's existence, was but a man in poor circumstances, his education obtained by his own industry. He knew no such word as fail; but onward he sped with unlimited knowledge, till finally he disclosed those discoveries which lay veiled from the earth for centuries. If we all should comply with his example, we could look at the poet's words in a thoughtful manner, and all agree in saying that "Knowledge is power."

C. J.

HABITS OF BEETLES.—The chief function of this family (*Nitidulariæ*) is that of scavengers. Their main business is to clear off decaying substances from the face of the earth, especially those minute and neglected portions which have escaped the attention of other scavengers whose operations are conducted on a larger scale. We may characterize them in one point of view as retail scavengers. They are, so to speak, users-up of waste materials. After the beast of prey has satisfied his hunger on the animal he has slain; after the hyena and the vulture have gorged themselves on its carion; after the fly has consumed the soft parts; after the burying-beetle and the Sliphidae have borne their part in the clearing away, and when nought but the bones remain, then come the Nitidulariæ to go over what they have left, to gnaw off every fragment of ligament or tendon, and to leave the bones as nearly in the state of phosphate of lime as external treatment can. In another point of view, however, their employment is wholesale and wide enough. They conduct their operations all over the world; their branches extend into the most remote districts; the materials with which they have to do, although mere waste, have no other limit to their variety or their number than the organized substances

TURKOMAN CHEQUER.—To-day our caravan was visited by crowds of the nomads dwelling on the spot. Some business was transacted, and bargains struck between the merchants and cattle-dealers of our

found on the surface of the globe. As in all great establishments, too, the principle of division of labour is carried to a great extent. Each different kind of substance has a different member of the firm told off to take charge of it. One species confines itself to rotten oranges, another to bones, a third to putrid fungi, a fourth to decaying figs. Decaying wood, decaying bark, decaying flowers, decaying leaves—all furnish distinct employment to different species. They are not all scavengers, however. Many pass their lives in flowers; others feed upon fresh victuals; and Mr. Frederick Smith, of the British Museum, has, whilst I write, brought to my notice a species of *Brachypelus* (*B. auritus*) which he has received from Australia, in a wild bees' nest, where it feeds, both in the larva and perfect state, on the wax and honey.—*A. Murray*, in *Transactions of Linnean Society*.

THE ARCHDUKE. A TALE OF THE MEXICAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Who now persists in calling Fortune false?
To me she has proved faithful; with fond love
Took me from out the common ranks of men,
And like a mother goddess, with strong arm
Carried me swiftly up the steps of life.
Nothing is common in my destiny!

Wellenstein.

It was over three months later. The morning of the 28th of May, 1864, was just dawning upon the New World.

The scene of our story changes.

Extending a hundred leagues along the Gulf of Mexico, there is a low and sandy coast, broken by marshes and shallow lagoons, and comprising thousands of square miles of desert wastes, where vegetation is confined to a few dwarfed shrubs—where the sun seems to pour molten fire, where the air is full of deadly malaria, where human life is an intrusion, where carion vultures gorge sullenly upon the dead fish washed ashore, where the waters are without sail, and the shores without dwellings, and where desolation, disease, and a horrible silence are reigning in ghastly union for ever!

This dismal region is the coast-line of the state of Vera Cruz.

Strange and sinister land.

In the midst of this dreary solitude, where there are no woods, nor wells of water, nor crops, nor pastures, nor flocks, man has made himself an abode, even a city of ten thousand inhabitants, lying in eternal barrenness, bordered by stagnant pools and marshes, cut off from the interior by desert, ravaged by terrible diseases, and appearing like the charnel-house of the adjacent wilderness!

This city is Vera Cruz.

It is hither that we come in the gray dawn of this summer morning.

There is scarcely a ripple along the shores, or a zephyr in the air, and scarcely a colour in the shadows around us. Above us is the dark blue sky, in which the stars are twinkling; before us are the almost motionless waters; and beside us is the sleeping city and its fortifications. The lighthouse on the castle of San Juan de Ulloa shows its light, as usual, and a few lesser lights appear amidst the ships in the roadstead and the houses in the city.

Suddenly, away to the east, low on the water, is seen a spring of colours in the desert-like sky—a spring that overflows with gorgeous hues, blending in indescribable magnificence, gushing out in rivers of gold, purple, and crimson, towards the zenith and along the horizon, and enlarging and deepening till the whole eastern board looks like a foreshadowing of heaven!

'Tis the realisation of the dreams of the angels during the night—is this morning in the tropics!

With the appearance of these promises of day, signs of life appear in various quarters of the city.

Marketmen, coming from the villages on the Yalapa and Orizaba roads, with mules and carts, present themselves at the inland gates, and hasten to their accustomed posts in the squares and under the porticos.

Little donkeys, with bells on their necks, commence carrying water in kegs from door to door—rain-water, caught in the "rainy season," and preserved in tanks throughout the rest of the year, no other water fit for family use being accessible.

A chain-gang commences cleaning the streets, the light on the castle is extinguished, the reveille sounds in the fortifications, followed by the movements of guards and reliefs, the provision-shops begin to open, and labourers commence going to their daily toil.

On, on came the herald-beams of the day-god, finding here and there a cloud to caress and glorify, and the night flies before them, withdrawing its dusky robes, till at length a vivid gleam flashes along the surface of the Mexican gulf, clothing the shores in radiance, and the new day is born.

At this hour, and under these circumstances, the city of Vera Cruz is presented under its most favourable aspects; its dark brown buildings, built of coral limestone quarried from the bed of the roadstead, ceasing to wear the sombre and prison-like hue which generally renders them so repulsive to strangers.

The rays of the rising sun fall upon the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, the forts of Santiago and Concepcion, the mole, the customs gate, the wall along the water-front, and the house-tops and domes which rise above it, clothing them all in radiance and beauty.

Yet the unoccupied churches and dwellings, many of them tumbling into ruins—taken in connection with the reduced population, which is not one half of its former number, and more especially with the absence of that large class which migrates yearly, the first of May, to avoid the *romito*—gives the city a deserted appearance.

A few straggling worshippers, mostly women, are seen going to mass at the church of San Domingo, the only one in the city at present kept open.

The vultures, which have set like specks along the sea all night, with their heads under their wings, commence hovering about the white sands on the inland sides of the city, in quest of their breakfast.

Upon the walls, in public places, amid the usual variety of posters and handbills, is seen one offering a large reward for the capture of Hernan de Valde, the chief of Mexican guerrillas, whose deeds during the last three years, and particularly during the last three months, have made him, so says the document, a "scourge" and a "terror!"

On the whole, the scene presented by Vera Cruz is as quiet and indolent as is its custom.

A few men appear in the streets and squared near the Mole, and proceed to put the finishing touches to a grand arch of triumph and other decorations that have for some time been in progress.

These decorations tell the story.

For several weeks the Archduke Maximilian has been daily and hourly expected at Vera Cruz, to take charge of the country.

As the morning wore along, the French mail steamer *Thamus* arrived and anchored in the roadstead, and her officers hastened to announce to the prefect of the city that the Imperial squadron was only a few leagues at sea, and would arrive in the course of a few hours.

The effect of this notification was at once manifest in the movements of the city authorities, and in the anxious efforts of the decorators to complete their grand arches of triumph.

At ten o'clock precisely, in accordance with a preconcerted signal, the news was announced to the public by six strokes of the Custom House bell.

The announcement of a bull-fight would have occasioned far more excitement than the archduke's approach.

Without tumult, without excitement, a few stragglers and then little groups commenced moving toward the Mole, walking as indolently and smoking as calmly as ever.

Large numbers of them had no positive faith in the archduke's arrival, he had been so many times promised, and so often found wanting.

Others did not care whether he came or not; but came and looked, smoked their cigars, exchanged a few words with their friends, and went off to their business.

Still others had no higher wish than to make an agreeable holiday of the proceedings.

A few French hotel-keepers, a few French troops, a little knot of Mexican traitors, a score or so of unmexicanized Spaniards, &c., could have been heard and seen, by careful scrutiny, to feign a little rejoicing, in connection with the authorities of the city.

In contrast to these latter, there were a few groups of men, who spoke in low tones, scowled at the French guards and French sympathizers, and otherwise betrayed that they were hostile to the archduke, but without bearing him hostility enough, or having apprehensions enough of him, to care to make any other demonstration of their feeling.

In short, the general sentiment of the Vera Cruzans toward the archduke was one of indifference and contempt.

At half-past ten o'clock a dark spot appeared on the eastern horizon, and in the course of half an hour this object was made out to be the Austrian frigate *Novara*, attended on either hand by the other vessels of the Imperial squadron.

Half an hour later the *Novara* fired a salute, which was heard on shore, and was immediately replied to by the French and English ships-of-war anchored along the beach towards *Sacrificios*.

At half-past twelve o'clock the *Novara* arrived, carrying the Austrian flag at the peak and the Mexican at the main, and anchored between the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa and the bastion of Santiago, which forms the north-western angle of the city.

She was received by a salute of one hundred guns from the bastion, and the greater part of the ships in port decorated themselves gaily with their varicoloured bunting.

The crowds stared, talked, and went home to dinner.

Little flags had been procured in great numbers by the authorities—little Mexican flags, with the eagle obliterated—and distributed to everybody who would receive them.

The roadstead was covered with boats, each with one of these little flags in each end, and a large number of them were soon clustered around the Austrian frigate.

The decorators continued their toil, experiencing much difficulty with the grand arch of triumph, which, like Maximilian's monarchy, was radically defective in its basis, and which finally, after much curving and pounding, came down with a grand crash.

During the excitement and mortification that ensued, the city authorities received a message from the archduke, to the effect that he should not land until morning, and the bungling decorators breathed free.

At five o'clock a large deputation of citizens, including Señor Mar and Count Vileto, assembled in Constitution Place, under the lead of General Almundo, and the whole party marched to the pier, and took boats to the frigate, to pay the archduke a visit.

Señor Mar was weary and red in the face, having been running up and down the streets nearly all day, assisting the authorities in their grand preparations and arrangements—but he was hopeful and happy.

Count Vileto had somewhat changed for the worse since the reader last saw him.

The wound he had received at the hands of our hero healed, but a great livid scar remained, disfiguring his whole countenance.

This scar had proved a source of constant annoyance and bitterness to Vileto, and had led him, in connection with the other circumstances of his relations to Hernan, to bear the young patriot a hatred that was beyond expression.

As the deputation pushed off from the Mole, a woman standing near the count noticed his disfigurement, and exclaimed aloud to a companion, as many others had done during the day:

"What a horrid scar!"

The smile this ejaculation called to the count's face resembled the grin of a hyena or tiger.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Who dares Interpret then my life for me, as 't were
One of the undistinguishable many?
True, in this present moment I appear
Fallen low indeed—but I shall rise again.
The high flood will soon follow in this ebb;
The fountain of my fortune, which now stops,
Repress'd and bound by some malicious star,
Will soon in joy play forth from all its pipes.

Shiller.

The Archduke Maximilian was standing on the deck of the *Novara*, attended by a single aide, and looking toward the shore.

He was born July 8, 1832, and is consequently about thirty-two years of age. His appearance, if not prepossessing, is that of a polite and educated gentleman of fair abilities, who has mingled much with his fellows. His most marked characteristic is his ability.

He has lost, since the commencement of his Mexican movements, much of the heartiness of manner that once characterised him, and has the air—which probably does not belie his sentiments—of being anxious to secure the goodwill of all who come in contact with him; an air, in short, of assumed and hollow suavity, which doubtless arises from a conviction that he cannot afford to be natural.

Whatever his enemies may say, there is nothing essentially bad about him.

He would like to be a famous emperor, and surround himself with a brilliant court, but he is neither heartless nor cruel.

Place him in power over a peaceful community, where he would have nothing to do but attend dress-parades and balls, give receptions, distribute indulgences to the poor, and look good-naturedly after hospitals and prisons, and he would make a passable monarch. In justice to him, let us add that he has been inveigled into his present position by false representations, and that the sinister importunities of Louis Napoleon, rather than the archduke's judgment and wishes are responsible for his present awkward position.

"And this is the Mexico of which I have dreamed," said the archduke to his aide. "My empire! The field in which I shall gain honour and glory! It is here that Cortez landed, on his way to overthrow Montezuma, and here that the galleons of Spain loaded their millions upon millions of silver. Land

and hundred guns
the ships in
their vari-
home to
numbers by
the eagle
who would
each with
large num-
the Austrian
experiencing
of triumph,
radically de-
after much
a grand
on that en-
from the
not land will
bathed free,
citizens, in-
assembled in
General Al-
the pier, and
archduke a
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disfigure-
x, as many
count's face

With these apologetic remarks, which the archduke received graciously, Almonte settled himself in his seat, and continued :

"The views of your majesty are very correct and proper; but permit me to question—first, the policy of issuing such a glowing proclamation; and, secondly, the policy of issuing a proclamation which touches upon so many measures and purposes which as yet have not got beyond conception. Candour compels me to announce to your majesty that the proclamation is at once too frank and enthusiastic. It unmasks your majesty's policy too fully. If your majesty will pardon me the expression, it is not rugged enough for this rude people. It does not adhere closely enough to the stern facts of Mexican politics and to the stern measures necessary to the pacification of the country."

The archduke looked a little troubled, but not displeased. A stranger to Mexico, he could not have failed to respect the views of one so long and ably identified with Mexican affairs as his companion. Moreover, the entire subserviency of Almonte to the wishes and interests of the archduke, as heretofore evinced on many occasions, gave his words their due weight.

"Thanks, general, for this frankness," said Maximilian, after a thoughtful pause. "Go on. Tell me what you would say and do in my place on this occasion."

Almonte again bowed profoundly, and proceeded : "The fact is, the delay in your majesty's arrival has put this able paper a little out of season—that is all. Issued a few months ago, in the flush of the French occupation, it would have been very suitable and proper. Just now your majesty has too much to do in Mexico—too many serious truths to deal with—to be enthusiastic. The situation has changed. Since your majesty sailed from Europe, disorders of a serious nature have occurred—disorders which threaten the government of your majesty, and which require the firmest of hands for their suppression."

The couriers and followers of Maximilian had been portraying, ever since his departure from Europe, the imperial prospects and purposes in the most brilliant colours, so that the frank information of the matter-of-fact schemer had a marked effect.

"First," continued Almonte, "the troops of Juarez have been very active, and have obtained quite as many successes as any of our forces. The road to Perote is actually held by them at this moment. Secondly, a band, or a number of bands, of the most daring brigands have taken possession of the Orizaba road between Puebla and the capital, and have been committing all sorts of depredations. These brigands call themselves by the high-sounding title of the Free Riders of Anahuac, and are led by a leader of the most daring and ferocious description. Thirdly, and worse than all the rest, that guerrilla chief who has so long annoyed us, Captain de Valde, has lately been causing us the utmost trouble. He has increased his troops, and has become the terror of the whole region between the coast and the capital, assailing our columns, cutting off our supply-trains, and striking us at every exposed point."

"I have long traced his career," said the archduke, with a shadow on his face. Generals Forey and Bazaine have frequently mentioned him in their reports, and, more lately, General Donal, as well as yourself, has had much to say about him. Is there no way of ridding the country of this scourge?"

"It seems not. We had him once, your majesty will remember, but he effected a daring escape from prison. His father, however, the marquis—"

"Yes, we have the marquis in close custody, and that is something," interrupted Maximilian, with considerable vivacity. "I saw him during our stay at Martinique, and offered him his liberty, on the condition that he and his son would submit to the empire, but he declined. It is strange how much these men are willing to do and suffer in opposing us! In the career of Captain de Valde to continue?"

"I trust not. Heaven knows that I have tried to put an end to it—that I have offered rewards, sent out pursuers, prepared traps of various descriptions for him! All in vain! Only yesterday I learned that he is prowling about Orizaba, at the head of his battalion, and my object in going up the road to-day was to take renewed measures and precautions against him. The exile and imprisonment of his father, the marquis, seems to have made him a very demon!"

The general received the paper with a profound bow, and hastily glanced over its enthusiastic and high-sounding sentences. As he read, a flush of pain and surprise appeared on his sallow visage, and he moved uneasily in his chair. This excitement increased each instant, and it was evident to the archduke, when the perusal of the document was finished, that his grand proclamation was not entirely agreeable to the wily and experienced reader.

"Speak, my dear general," said the archduke—

"speak freely. Let me have your entire confidence in this matter."

"Your majesty's command is my law," answered Almonte, looking up, "and my sole object is your majesty's success in the great task upon which your majesty has entered. Let my zeal in your majesty's service excuse me if I do not agree fully in the estimate our friends have expressed concerning this document. Let my forty years of active participation in Mexican affairs entitle me to state my views in this matter."

The face of the archduke brightened.

"Half-a-million, did you say, my dear general?" he murmured, reflectively. "You are aware that such a loan will be most acceptable to me!"

"I have so informed him, in confidence, and he is anxious to place the sum at your majesty's disposal. In fact, he has brought the sum to Vera Cruz, and can pass it to your chamberlain or treasurer at an hour's notice. He is attended by his particular friend, the noble Count Viletto, who is engaged to his daughter, I believe—"

"Ah, yes!" interrupted the archduke, with marked interest. "I recall these gentlemen fully. They were instrumental in procuring the adhesion of the state and city of Zacatecas to the empire. In fact, did not Count Viletto capture Captain de Valde?"

"He did, your majesty—and that glorious deed is but one of his titles to your majesty's favourable notice that General Donal, as well as myself, has duly reported, if your majesty will be pleased to recall the facts!"

"I recall his noble conduct," rejoined Maximilian, "and will take care that he and Senor Mar shall be rewarded. Did you say that they were present? They deserve a private interview. Let me receive the deputation, however; and after these matters, my dear general, we will return to the subject of the proclamations and addresses."

With this, the archduke arose, and the two men returned to the second deck, where the members of the deputation were still fidgeting, whispering to one another, and staring around them.

A general presentation followed, the prefect of Vera Cruz made an address, the archduke replied briefly, and an informal conversation succeeded. The Archduchess Charlotte was conducted by her husband from the adjoining saloon and presented to the visitors; the prefect made an address to her, to which she replied in a few graceful terms, and then followed another general conversation, in which the so-called emperor and empress appeared to good advantage.

At length, leaving his high officials to entertain the deputation, Maximilian invited Senor Mar and Count Viletto to attend him, and withdraw with them to the saloon, where he graciously requested them to be seated.

The heart of Senor Mar beat quick at this treatment. He had reached a position which had filled his imagination for years! was actually basking in the light of imperialism! was actually breathing in the presence of the successor of the Montezumas!

Count Viletto was cool and observant, but betrayed by his manner that he appreciated the high honours of which he was the recipient.

"I have been duly informed, gentlemen," commenced Maximilian, bowing from one to the other, "of the zeal with which you have laboured for the establishment of the empire. I thank you warmly for your labours, and will take an early occasion to testify in a befitting manner my recognition of your conduct."

Mar could hardly find his voice, so great was his emotion, but he finally declared that the results of his efforts had not been equal to his zeal, and made an allusion to the proposed loan.

"Ah, yes!" said the archduke. "General Almonte informed me of your generous intention. A half-million, I think he said?"

"Yes, your majesty. I ventured to assume, with the approval of the Count Viletto, that even this trifle, at this time, when your majesty has not established any financial system, might be acceptable."

"You are right, my dear senor," said Maximilian, smiling pleasantly. "I accept, with much pleasure and many thanks, the generous loan you so nobly place at my disposal."

"The money is at hand," continued Mar, "at the house I am temporarily occupying in the city. General Donal sent a guard with it. Will your majesty send an officer to receive it, or shall I bring it aboard the frigate?"

Maximilian reflected a moment, and said :

"The evening is pleasant, the city safe, and why should I not pass a few hours ashore *incognito*? The prefect can look after my safety, and I can improve the opportunity of calling at your residence and receiving the money. I have a desire," he added, "to see for myself what our good friends and subjects say and think among themselves of their new ruler."

The visitors approved of the proposed step, and it was agreed that the archduke, with a few trustworthy attendants, should call at Mar's about midnight, in the course of his secret tour of observation, and complete the affair of the loan. Maximilian then addressed a few words to the count, incidentally alluding to the marked nobility of his birth, and concluding as follows:

"The seal on your face, my dear count, appears fresh, and dates undoubtedly from the current troubles. May I take the liberty of inquiring how you received it?"

A look of intense bitterness mantled the count's features, but he calmed himself, and replied :

"It was given me by the guerilla-chief, Captain de Valde. Perhaps General Donat reported the circumstance to your majesty?"

"Ah, yes—I had forgotten. More and more of the deeds of that terrible enemy. Let us hope that our united and renewed efforts will put an end to him."

The count made a fierce reply, and showed how deeply he felt his disfigurement, and the trio returned to the deck.

For half an hour or so the archduke continued to converse with the leading members of the delegation, and then, with a lengthy exchange of polite farewells, the visitors proceeded to embark.

"At midnight, remember, my dear señor," whispered Maximilian, at parting with Mar. "I have arranged all with the prefect."

The excitement with which Mar listened to the confidential words of his new sovereign left him for a time speechless, as the boats moved shorewards.

"At length my dream of a title is becoming a glorious reality," he finally whispered to his companion.

"I shall receive his majesty at my own house!—again speak face to face with him!"

"Better still," answered the count. "Ada will have a good chance to see him and be impressed by him. I trust the event will incline her towards the empire and wean her correspondingly from that guerilla, so that she will look upon me with a little more favour."

"It will—it will! In any case, my dear count, do not be discouraged. The girl has not treated you as she should have done since we left home, but I swear to you that she shall speedily change for the better. After what I have seen to-night, I will not endure any further opposition to my wishes. She must and shall become your wife, without any ifs or delays!"

"A thousand thanks for the assurance, my dear Mar," rejoined the count, sharing his companion's excitement. "How beautiful she has become!—How madly I love her! While pressing this matter, let us endeavour to accomplish the doom of De Valde. Curse him! curse him! It is my first and last pray that I may once more get him into my keeping."

By this time the boats had reached the Mole, and the delegation landed, its members separating with polite adieus, and proceeding in various directions, Mar and Viletto going at a brisk pace towards Constitution Place.

They were too much excited to notice that a tall figure, closely muffled in the hood and garb of a friar, who had been standing on the Mole at the moment of their arrival, had left his place of concealment, and was noiselessly dodging their steps and watching their every movement.

CHAPTER XXX.

And yet remember I the good old proverb
"Let the night come, before we praise the day."—
Fear hovers round the head of prosperous men,
For still unsteady are the scales of fate.

Gordon.

ADA and her duenna were seated in cosy chairs by the windows of a pleasant apartment on Constitution Place, gazing into the square, listening to the music of the brass band, and watching the rockets, fire-balloons, and other amusements provided for boys and the more ignorant of the people.

The soft lace curtains were drawn apart; the large lamp on the centre table was shaded by a ground glass globe, leaving the pretty room in a soft dim light; and the white carpet, with the pink buds scattered over its surface, gave an elegant finish to the apartment.

Except this apartment, every room in the house from top to bottom was brilliantly lighted, and the whole front of the building was covered, according to orders, with gay flags, white curtains, &c., to give it a festive appearance, in honour of the archduke's arrival.

Senor Mar rented the dwelling of his Mexican banker, whose brother, having taken his family from Vera Cruz, to be absent during the sickly season, had given him leave to let it; and with Ada, Dolores, Count Viletto, and a small retinue of servants, he had been nearly a week in possession, awaiting the archduke.

There was a bright and happy look on Ada's face as she leaned back in her easy chair, and a tender smile on her sweet mouth that showed that pleasant thoughts were busy in her heart.

As Ada thus sat musing, Mar and Viletto appeared near the house, and paused in a position where they could look upon her.

"See!" whispered Mar, with a scowling face.

"Such a sight as this is puzzling. I can't understand the girl at all. Notwithstanding the fact that she had beyond all doubt much feeling for De Valde; and notwithstanding that he is hunted, and outlawed, and every day liable to be captured and shot, she seems as light-hearted as a bird. At times, I have noticed that she is absolutely radiant—singing about the house,

and taking interest in every beggar that approaches, and appearing not to have a single care or trouble on her mind. Look at the joyful expression of her countenance at this moment. What do you think of it? What does it mean?"

"It means that she sees that accused De Valde!" growled the count, trembling with jealous rage. "She would not be so light-hearted if she were not often favoured with his presence."

"Impossible! He would not dare to come near us!"

"And yet he did come very near you and your half million, on our way to the capital. Believe me, my dear Mar, that girl is in some way in communication with De Valde."

Mar combated this idea a few moments, but without finally said :

"Well, well, we will leave the question to time. You will naturally wish to tell her about your visit, and so I'll improve the chance of stepping around to my French barber's, taking care to be back in time to dress before his majesty's visit."

The two men separated, and Mar advanced towards the door of his new residence, coming under the observation of Ada.

"Ah, there's my father!" she murmured. "The door is closed and locked, you know, on account of the money. Haslon, Dolores, to admit him!"

The duenna made a grimace expressive of the detestation with which she regarded her employer, and hastened to obey the orders of her young mistress.

A moment later he entered the apartment.

"Well, Ada," he said, in a tone of supreme satisfaction and delight. "Such glory—such honour as I have attained! I have stood face to face with the Emperor Maximilian—have received the pressure of his noble hand—have been introduced by him to the emperor—have been treated to a private and confidential interview with him."

"What did he resemble?" asked Ada, satirically. "A man?"

"Why, of course," returned Mar, too absorbed in his pleasant reflections to notice the sarcasm; "what should he look like, if not a man? He treated me with the utmost consideration, and seemed to be gratified beyond expression at my offer to lend him half a million, accepting it with many thanks. I saw in a moment that I had made a splendid impression upon him. He introduced me to the empress, and altogether treated me as well as though I were a prince of the blood. I'm sure to have a title. He is coming here to-night——"

"Coming here?" repeated Ada, in surprise.

"Yes, coming here, to this very house, to see me!" said Mar, rubbing his hands joyfully. "He is coming to receive and remove the half million," and he glanced to the rear of the room, where a pile of well-filled canvas bags were deposited. "I want you to have a splendid collation in readiness in the adjoining room—I gave the necessary order for its preparation at the French hotel near here—and I have also ordered some choice wines. They will be here before ten o'clock."

Ada nodded, and Mar went on :

"And see here, Ada; I want you to look your best. Everything depends upon a first impression. Your French dressmaker's bill amounted to five thousand dollars, so you must have something splendid to wear; and I know your jewels are as abundant and valuable as those of any lady in Mexico. You must look like a very queen to-night, especially as none of the ladies of Vera Cruz have yet shown themselves in honour of the coming of our new rulers."

Ada assented to Senor Mar's wish to look her best, and he proceeded with a glowing description of his visit to the Novara, interspersing remarks about the attire of the archduchess, her manner, &c.

In the midst of his encomiums he was interrupted by a loud ringing at the door-bell, and the next moment Miguel, the butler of the Hacienda del Lago, made his appearance, the duenna having given him admittance.

He was greeted with exclamations of surprise.

"Is any one sick at home, Miguel?" asked Ada, noticing the man's travel-stained appearance.

"No, señora," was the reply. "I just came down to see the master on business."

Mar arose, feeling a vague apprehension at his servant's manner, and questioned him as to the cause of his strange and unseasonable visit.

"I'd like to see you alone, señora," said Miguel, in a low tone, his troubled gaze seeking his master's face.

"Something strange—has happened!"

"Ada, you had better retire with Dolores, and attend to the decorations of your table and your own dress," said Senor Mar turning to the maiden.

Ada and Dolores instantly withdrew, and Mar exclaimed :

"Now, Miguel, what's the meaning of all this mystery?"

"I'm afraid you'll blame me," said the man trembling; "but I couldn't help it. There's been a robbery at the hacienda!"

(To be continued.)

STEPMOTHERS.

A BAD woman will make a bad stepmother, just as she will be a bad aunt. But a good woman will be no worse a stepmother than she is a wife. The chief harm done by the *cantilena* about stepmothers is the poison instilled into the minds of the children themselves. Children are naturally suspicious. Their acute perception leads them to notice every movement and look of those with whom they live; and it is part of their native sensitiveness and fancy to invent theories to account for phenomena which, in reality, proceed from the purest chance.

Jealousy, indeed, is a childlike, quite as much as it is a feminine, foible; whatever jealousy accompanies the relation in question lying, perhaps, for the most part, on the children's side. The older the children are, the more tact and delicacy their temper and disposition will certainly require from the woman who has undertaken to supply to them a mother's place; but there is no awkwardness about discharging such duties which is not surpassed by the other inevitable difficulties of a married woman's life. For what awkwardness exists the poets are to blame.

A clever woman can, perhaps, laugh at Ovid's nonsense. But the nonsense creeps into a child's heart and a child's imagination twice as easily, and is twice as hard to eradicate when it has taken root. Every one who knows children knows what trivial fancies have power to embitter their lives. That the lives of stepchildren are sometimes embittered is due less to the stepmother than to the unconscious malice of a score of relatives, who pretend to themselves not to be aware that every time they lift their eyebrows at the new wife's name, they are dropping venom into innocent and naturally-loving hearts. The proof that the fault rests rather on this side than the other is the fact that in circles where the stepchildren are young, there is rarely a shadow of a cloud. They never hear the ridiculous gossip of the poets and romances till a long and happy store of experience has taught them to laugh it. Were it not for the world without, they never would have dreamt till their lives were over of any necessary difference between a first and second mother.

If such domestic histories were presented in a tale, the novelists might say that the histories were unnatural. That they should be less piquant than the fictions in which every one is at cross purposes, and in which every home is the theatre of internecine war, it is easy to conceive. But those who know life best know that the novelists would be wrong. Not only is it true that "such things are," but they "are" much oftener than not.

Real life is on the side of the stepmothers in such cases, and it is only fiction that is against them. It seems, however, to be the law that the stepmothers should be the invariable victims of literary fiction; and anecdotes of terrible stepmothers will never be ineffective so long as society is thoughtless, women sottish, or children suspicious.

GAMBLING IN CHINA.—The Chinese are passionately addicted to gambling, and the endless variety of games of chance in common use among them does credit to their ingenuity and invention, for it is not likely that they have learned anything from their neighbours. The respectable merchant, who devotes the hours of daylight assiduously to his business, sparing no labour in adjusting the most trifling items of account, will win or lose thousands of dollars overnight with the greatest complacency. Every grade of society is imbued with the passion. I have amused myself watching the coolies in the streets of Tientsin gambling for their dinner. The itinerant cooks carry with them, as part of the wonderful epitome of a culinary establishment with which they perambulate the streets, a cylinder of bamboo, containing a number of sticks on which are inscribed certain characters. These mystic symbols are shaken up in the tube, the candidate for hot dumpling draws one, and according to the writing found on it so does he pay for his repast. So attractive is gambling in any form to the Chinese, that a Tientsin coolie will generally prefer to risk paying double for the remote chance of getting a meal for nothing. On one occasion I volunteered to act as proxy for a hungry coolie who was about to try his luck. The offer was accepted with eagerness, and I was fortunate enough to draw my constituent a dinner for nothing. I was at once put down as a professor of the black art, and literally besieged by a crowd of others, all begging me to do them a similar favour, which, of course, I prudently declined. Had I indeed been successful a second time, the dispenser of the tempting morsels would certainly have protested

against my interference as an invasion of his prerogative, which is to win and not to lose. The Chinese gamblers are, of course, frequently ruined by the practice. They become desperate after a run of ill luck; every consideration of duty and interest is sunk, and they play for stakes which might have startled even the Russian nobles, who used to gamble for serfs. In the last crisis of all, a dose of opium settles all accounts pertaining to this world. In games of skill the Chinese are no less accomplished. Dominoes, draughts, chess, and such like are to be seen in full swing at every tea-house, where the people repair to while away the evening. The little groups one sees in these places exhibit intense interest in their occupation; the victory is celebrated by the childlike exultation of the winner, and any pair of Chinese draughts-players may have sat for Wilkie's celebrated picture.

FRONT FASHIONS.—Frenchwomen used to have dark hair; blondes were not generally admired, and tried by every possible means to darken their hair; but now, since the empress has made fair hair à la mode, all the women must be blondes, and what with gold powder and light wigs, they do succeed. As to complexion, a dark one is now unknown; roses and lilies now abound on every cheek; even some young men of fashion have not disdained the use of cosmetics, but have come out from the hands of the *coiffeur* romantically pale or delicately tinted.—“*Celebrities of London and Paris.*” By Captain R. H. Gronow.

A PAINFUL incident is mentioned in connection with the loss of the *Havelock*, near Kirkcudbright. At time were on, and as all efforts to obtain communication with the shore proved fruitless, and the ill-fated vessel was being rapidly knocked to pieces, her crew seem to have given up all hope; they assembled on the deck, and joined in singing a hymn, the sound of their voices while so engaged being distinctly audible through the fury of the storm to those on shore, who were inexpressibly moved by this mournful scene; the men then took to the rigging, where with the utmost apparent composure they seemed to await their end.

A MONGOL DWELLING.

It is simply the habitation of a Mongol family—a tent, but of a more permanent construction than the ordinary travelling tent. It consists of a frame of light trellis work covered with thick felt, is circular in form, with a conical shaped roof, but nearly flat. A hole in the apex of the roof lets out the smoke from the argol fire which burns all day in the middle of the tent. At night, when the fire is out, and before the inmates retire to rest, the hole in the roof is covered up. I did not measure the upright part of the wall of the tent, but it is under five feet, and you cannot enter without stooping. The tent is about fifteen feet in diameter. A piece of felt hanging from the top forms a door. The Mongols sleep on mats laid on the ground, and pack very close. They have no bedding, but sleep generally in their clothes, merely loosing their girdles. In addition to the family, I have frequently observed a number of young kids brought into the tent for shelter on cold nights.

When the owner decides on moving to better pasture, his yourt is packed up in a few hours and laid on the back of a camel, or failing that, two oxen answer the purpose. Although yourt is the name always used by foreigners, I never heard it from a Mongol. They call it “gi-rai,” as distinguished from a travelling tent, which they call “maichung.” Such are the dwellings of the Mongols, and so much are they attached to them, that even when they live in settled communities, as in Urga, where they have every facility for building wooden houses, they still stick to their yorts, merely enclosing them with a rough wooden palisade. In the whole journey I did not meet with a single instance of a Mongol living in a house, or in anything else than a yourt or gi-rai.

The Mongols are very superstitious, and certain rules of etiquette have to be observed in riding up to and entering a yourt. One of these is that all whips must be left outside the door, for to enter a yourt with a whip in the hand would be very disrespectful to the residents. Huc explains this almost in the words, “Am I a dog that you should cross my threshold with whips to chastise me?” There is a right and a wrong way of approaching a yourt also. Outside the door there are generally ropes lying on the ground, held down by stakes for the purpose of tying up their animals when they want to keep them together. There is a way of getting over or round these ropes that I never learned, but on one occasion the ignorant breach of the rule on our part excluded us from the hospitality of the family. The head of the house was outside his yourt when we rode up! we saluted him with the customary *Mendo! Mendo!* &c.; but the only response we got was a volley of quiet abuse, in which our salutation was frequently repeated in ironical tones, as much as to say, “*Mendo! Mendo!* You come to my tent with sugared words on your lips,

and disregard the rules of civility, which a child would be ashamed of doing, *Mendo! Mendo!* If you do not know how to conduct yourselves like gentlemen, you had better go about your business.”

So we turned and went away—not in a rage, for we knew we had committed some grave offence against propriety.

The furniture of a Mongol yourt is very simple. A built-up fireplace in the middle of the floor is the only fixture. A large flat iron pan for cooking, or, if the parties are luxurious, they may possess two such utensils, and sport two fireplaces, by which means they can boil their mutton and water for their tea at the same time. A basin to hold milk, and a good large jug with a spout for the same purpose, and for the convenience of boiling it at the fire while the big pan is on, comprise all their kitchen and table service. Each person carries his own wooden *ei-iga*, or cup, in his bosom, and, so armed, is ready to partake of whatever is going anywhere; and his small pocket-knife, by which he can cut up his quota of mutton. A wooden box serves as a wardrobe for the whole family. No tables or chairs are necessary, and I found no trace of a toilet service. These, with a few mats on the ground, for squatting on by day and sleeping on by night, comprise all the actual furniture of a yourt.—“*Siberian Overland Route from Pekin to Petersburg, through the Deserts.*” By Alexander Michie.

THE period allowed by the Act of 1844, after which the right of Government to purchase all railways made since that year begins, expires in October, 1865. The Cabinet must bring in a bill to renew the period, and is not very likely to do it without suggesting conditions which will raise no small amount of discussion.

THE LATEST WONDER.—Londoners are at present amused with the performances of an intelligent fish. His food is fish, of which he consumes two stones weight per diem, and his predilection is a fresh herring. One great feature in the exhibition is the cleverly in doing what he is ordered. There is no hesitation whatever, but upon being told to turn a somersault he rolls over in the most complacent manner. He paddles with the right or left fin, as indicated by his trainer, and most obediently taps a tin tambourine held out to him.

BRANDY GROWING POPULAR.—The extent of intoxication by brandy, and its constant increase, are beginning to rouse the attention of our medical world. France, brilliant as Paris may be, is seriously affected by three causes which are sensibly deteriorating her population. Her greatest curse is her army, which by annually sweeping one hundred thousand of the flower of her youth into the service—fifty thousand of whom never return valid men—makes her weaker children the father of the next generation. The barrenness of marriages is her next curse; no parents have more than two children, the majority have only one child. Alcohol is another curse. In a parish in the department of the Lower Seine, which contains only nine thousand souls (men, women, and infants,) the annual consumption of spirits is fourteen thousand gallons; and this parish is instanced not as an exceptional example, but as a too frequent case in the provinces. In 1857, there were one hundred and seventy-six lunatics admitted, sixty of whom were mad from indulgence in spirits; in 1851, there were one hundred and seventy-one insane admitted, forty-two of whom were deranged by ardent drinks. Switzerland—sedate, abstemious, frugal Switzerland—has not escaped the plague; in the canton of Berne alone, there were twenty-five times as much brandy consumed in 1860 as in 1811. It is in northern nations the increase of the consumption of ardent spirits is especially noticeable. There, even more than in France, the evil tells on the population, threatening them with rapid decline in intellect as well as in body. Sweden alone consumes very nearly two hundred million quarts of ardent spirits annually.

LADY VENETIA.

CHAPTER XVII.

That I am changeable, you think—
Go to, you know me not!
From such a charge my heart must shrink,
 Anon.

From the full chord one note had fallen.
From the bright cirlet one gem was torn.
From the wreath of love one flower had perished.

LUCIA permitted Sister Maria to array her in her bridal robes, though she shuddered and shrank as the white folds of her dress fell around her, and she wearily said:

“I wish it were my shroud; but it will not be long before I shall lie in that. The marquis is destroying me, but he has the right to demand even the sacrifice

of my life, if he chooses to ask it. Oh! Sister Maria, when I am gone, tell Vittorio what force was used to bind me to his will. Let him not think of me with loathing when I am lying in my silent grave.”

“Child, child, you break my heart. Do not talk thus wildly; you will live to bless others, and in so doing eventually find the blessing of peace yourself. The marquis only asks you to bear his name; to accept the honourable position of mistress here—and it seems to me that you violate no duty in obeying his wishes.”

“I know it, sister,” meekly replied the pale victim. “I am preparing to obey him; but, oh! if you could look into my poor heart: if you could see how love and duty are wrestling there, you would pity me. At moments I even forget that Vittorio has given his truth to another; I can think only of how much he loved me; how happy we might have been, even in poverty, and the splendour I shall gain by this sacrifice becomes doubly loathsome to me.”

The nun gravely replied:

“Remember, Lucia, that Count Colonna is already the husband of another, or on the eve of becoming so. Such regrets should be resolutely put away from you now. They are sinful in the sight of heaven.”

“But they had not given me time to forget; to school my heart to the loveless, lifeless future that lies before me. It seems to me a crime and degradation to give myself in my first youth to a man sinking into his grave from old age. Every one will cry out shame upon me for a mercenary, heartless wretch who has sacrificed herself for gold. Oh! I am bitterly humiliated by the necessity which compels me to this act, Sister Maria.”

“The few to whom you are known will not judge you so harshly, Lucia. A few years of bondage will probably release you from the slight tie that will bind you to the marquis. He does not ask your love; he merely requires the tender attentions of a daughter which you have so long lavished on him.”

“I know—I know,” she impatiently replied. “We have already exhausted argument on this subject, and now I will annoy you no more with the expression of my feelings; but I cannot crush down my rebellious heart, and I shall yet become the victim of the bitter regrets that fill it: I shall perish as the flower defrauded of light and dew from heaven; but what matters it to him who has given me this fate? I must walk on my appointed path, and God will judge me less harshly than men may do.”

She threw herself on a seat beside a window which looked toward La Tempesta, on which the evening sun was brightly shining. A sudden convulsion passed over her face, and she pointed to a figure which was slowly descending the pathway leading toward the castle. It was Father Boniface, on his way thither to perform the marriage ceremony. With a ghastly attempt to smile, she said:

“There comes the minister of fate to me. Oh! if that old man could know what wrong he is about to consummate he would shrink from binding me to the marquis as much as if he were chaining a living, suffering body to that of a corpse. But it is too late to murmur now; the die is cast, and henceforth I shall have no will but that of my master.”

In the calmness of her years, Sister Maria thought that time would show Lucia how much she had gained, how little lost in the compact she was about to form, and she repeated the reply that arose to her lips. Lifting an orange wreath from the table, she said:

“You must complete your toilette, Lucia. Without these flowers, no bride appears in this country.”

The young girl recoiled; then suddenly beat her graceful head, as she bitterly said:

“From ancient times it has been the custom to decorate the victim for the sacrifice, and I will not refuse to wear the symbols of mine. Am I not a fair bride? See—in death I shall not be whiter than I am now.”

The nun looked upon her and shivered. She began to fear that life or reason might indeed be the sacrifice to this enforced union, and she tenderly folded her in her arms and whispered:

“Pray to God for help to bear your burden, and it will be granted. Oh! my darling, if I had comprehended how deeply you shrink from this ceremony, I would never have urged you to accept the Marquis for home and station.”

“I know you would not,” replied Lucia, with sudden lightness; “but what is the use of grieving over what cannot be helped? Regrets are useless now, and I am playing a sad part to alarm you so. Forget what I have lately said: only when I am at rest tell Vittorio why I was compelled to assume a position that is so odious to me. That is all; and now I am calm—cold, as an iceberg. I shall play my part well—oh, very well, in the farce about to be enacted. I shall not faint, or go into hysterics—neither shall I die till my heart is quite broken, and I have been told that it takes a long time to crush a young heart.”

Her flighty manner was even more alarming to her companion than her previous anguish had been, but she had no further consolation to offer, and she remained silent till the summons came for them to make their appearance below.

The nun glanced at Lucia, and saw that she had composed herself, though her lately pale cheeks there glowed a vivid spot of crimson in the centre of each. She calmly said:

"I am quite ready. Strength is always granted us for the inevitable. Come, my friend; let not the marquis complain of delay."

Sister Maria drew her arm within her own, and together they descended to find the marquis with Father Boniface and the housekeeper awaiting their appearance. Colonna surveyed Lucia with interest; he noted the feverish glow upon her cheeks—the unquiet glimmer of her eyes; and he motioned her to a seat beside himself, as he said in a low tone:

"The trial will soon be past, Lucia, and you will only save one more devoted friend on whom you will possess every claim of gratitude for your compliance with his will. Do not tremble, child. Do not let me see that you shrink away from me."

She gently replied:

"I have made my last bitter retort, my lord. Henceforth my obedience is due to you, and you shall find that I will scrupulously render it. Pardon my late petulance; and, if you can, forget it. I promise to be faithful to the duties I have consented to assume. Let that suffice."

He bowed, and looked anxiously toward the door, through which he was momentarily expecting Baldoni and his daughter to enter, as his own immediate dependents were to be the only witnesses to this unpromising bridal.

But we must flit away to the cottage of the steward, and relate what occurred there at an earlier hour.

Pepita received with rage and scorn the information that Lucia was really about to become the Lady of Colonna; but she nevertheless prepared to appear at the castle at the appointed hour.

Her toilette was scarcely completed, when her father came in with a wild expression on his face, holding in his hand a letter heavily marginated with black.

He sank upon a seat, and gasped:

"It is done, Pepita! Your deadly drug has performed its mission, and Count Angostina is dead."

Pepita's cheek blanched a little, but she rapidly asked:

"How do you know this? If it is true, it must put an end to the fine doing up yonder. I believed that Fate would never permit that creature to become Marchioness of Colonna."

She impatiently approached her father, who sat motionless, as if stupefied with the success of his own deed. He still grasped the letter tenaciously, and Pepita attempted to take it from him, as she said:

"What ails you? Why should you stare at me in that stony manner? Is it so dreadful to you to get rid of a man, when I so readily sacrificed my darling Fido to convince you of the power of my drug? What was Count Angostina to you or me, but an impediment in our upward path?"

Baldoni drew a long breath, and in a dull, mechanical voice, replied:

"That is true enough, Pepita, but he will trouble us no longer. This letter is for the marquis, but I also have one to the same import. Count Angostina died suddenly in Vienna, soon after reading some letters that had been forwarded to him from Berlin. His seizure was very unexpected, and the physicians pronounced it apoplexy. His body has been embalmed, and is now on its way to the castle, to be placed in the family vault. These letters have been delayed, and the funeral cortège may be almost here now. We must go Jon at once and inform the marquis of this sad catastrophe."

A disdainful smile curled the lip of Pepita as she heard his last words, and looked on the lugubrious expression of his face. She contemptuously said:

"To see you and hear you speak, one might be led to believe that you lament the fate of Count Angostina. Come! let us hasten with this brave news to the jubilant bridegroom; it will at least teach him that when death strikes the young, the aged valetudinarian should be thinking of something more suitable to his years than a bonny bridal."

She threw on her mantilla, and after taking a large draught of wine to strengthen his nerves for the scene he anticipated, Baldoni joined her, and together they walked toward the castle, discussing the good that might arise to themselves through the demise of the eldest son, the absence of the younger one, and the fatal effect they both believed this unexpected blow would have upon the enfeebled marquis.

"If it does not kill him, we can help him off as we have helped his son," said Pepita, significantly, as they entered the grounds that lay immediately around

the castle. "He shall not now live to make Lucia mistress here."

"Hush-h!" said her father, warningly; yet he immediately spoke of what occupied his own mind. "The dead son was the only depository of the family secret. By this time Count Vittorio is away with his bride, and it will be impossible to recall him. The marquis will have no alternative; he must confide it to my keeping, and in that event our fortune is made."

As Baldoni turned to close the gate through which they had entered, a mounted horseman dashed up to it, lifted his cap, and said:

"I am the courier sent forward to announce to the Marquis of Colonna that the body of his son has reached the village which lies beyond here, and in another hour the funeral cortège will be at the castle."

Baldoni quickly replied:

"It is fortunate that I encountered you first, for the letters announcing the sad bereavement have but just arrived. I am the steward of the marquis, and I beg that you will return at once, and stop the progress of the procession till I have time to prepare him for its arrival."

The man bowed, turned his horse's head, and dashed off in the direction of the village.

The father and daughter walked slowly forward, conferring with each other in guarded tones; but when they came in sight of the entrance to the castle they assumed a sad and decorous air, and walked gravely toward the apartment occupied by the bridal party.

When they came in, the marquis impatiently spoke:

"Ha! Baldoni, so you have come at last. I scarcely expected you to linger thus when I had commanded your presence here at a stated hour. You have brought the settlements I desired to have prepared? I am quite ready to sign them, and impatient to get through with all this excitement. It is not good for me, for I feel that I am becoming nervous."

Baldoni, with an air of deep sadness, replied:

"Pardon me, my lord; but my delay was unavoidable, and you will excuse it when you learn its cause. Have I your permission to speak with the good father a moment?"

"I cannot imagine what you can have to say to him just now; but, if you must speak with him, do it quickly," was the irritated response.

"Thanks, my lord; I will not detain him a moment."

The eyes of the old man followed the movements of Baldoni inquisitively, and his ears, undulled by age, heard the exclamation of dismay uttered by the priest when the tidings of death were communicated to him. He saw the ominous-looking letter transferred to his hands, and cried out:

"What is that? Who brings a mourning letter here at such a time as this? Has any evil befallen Vittorio? Tell me at once, for I cannot bear suspense."

The sudden anguish in his tones betrayed how keen his apprehensions were, and Father Boniface approached him with an expression of deep sympathy upon his venerable face.

"It is not Count Vittorio, my lord; but—but, you have another son."

"And—he—is—dead!" gasped the marquis, sinking back. "I see it in your face, and words are not necessary to confirm the evil tidings. Oh, my son—my soul! that I could have died for thee! Why should I, crippled, perishing by inches, have been spared, when you have been struck down in the vigour of your manhood?"

He sunk down, faint and pallid, and Lucia, forgetting her late repulsion, sprang to his assistance. She bathed his face, and clasped his nerveless hands, while the others stood around in silent consternation at the effect the news had produced.

The long expiration of the eldest son, the devotion of the father to his younger one, led those who knew the marquis best to believe that he would not deeply feel the loss he had sustained. But he remembered his eldest born as the only solace of his sad life in his first uncongenial union, and in his heart there was a deep fount of tenderness for the lost one. When he recovered sufficiently to speak, he faintly said:

"Leave me with Father Boniface and Lucia, while he reads to me the fatal tidings which have come so unexpectedly to put an end to the injustice I was about to commit. Understand all of you that I gave this young girl no choice but to accept my hand; now, I release her from her promise, though it is my purpose to provide for her as liberally as if she really bore my name. Burn the settlements, Baldoni, and have others prepared, that I may sign them before I die, for now my time on earth will be short."

"I trust not, my lord," replied the hypocrite, with every appearance of sympathy; "but I shall lose no time in obeying your orders."

"Do so." And the afflicted father waved his hand impatiently in token of dismissal. As the door closed on the departing group, he turned feebly towards the priest and said:

"Now break the seal, and tell me how so strong a man as Angostina came to perish in the hey-day of life."

Father Boniface obeyed, and in a tremulous voice read aloud the following lines:—

"VIENNA, June 29th, 18—.
It has become my painful duty to announce to the Marquis of Colonna the sudden seizure of his son which has ended so fatally. As his physician, and the one best qualified to undertake this task, I will simply relate what has occurred.

"Count Angostina Colonna had been in Vienna but a week when I was summoned in haste to his hotel, as he had, without previous warning, been seized with illness, and lay in a state of insensibility. On reaching his bedside, I found this to be true. He lay in what appeared to be a fit of apoplexy, and although his servant asserted that it was a first attack, all my efforts failed to restore sensibility. He continued to breathe for several hours with that heavy, labored respiration which is the certain indication of the disease of which he perished.

"Everything was done for him that human skill could devise, but all alike failed to produce any effect. When convinced that he was extinct, I made minute inquiries into his late manner of life, and I ceased to feel surprise at his sudden decease.

"Count Angostina has for years lived a very gay life, participating freely in the indulgences of the *cuisine* and the wine cellar, though I do not find that he was ever guilty of great excess. The result is this most painful bereavement, for which I offer my most heart-felt sympathy."

"On the evening of his death Count Colonna had been reading letters which were forwarded to him from Berlin. One from yourself, and another from his brother, were found open on the table beside him: a third one lay upon the hearth, partially consumed. From the position of his hand when his servant found him, it was supposed that the last had fallen from it on the coals.

"I examined the fragments to ascertain if this letter had any connection with his seizure, but it seemed to relate entirely to business affairs.

"The case appeared so plain and simple that I had no *post-mortem* examination made, though I caused the body to be carefully embalmed; and, in a few days, the sad procession which bears back the body of your son to his ancestral home will set out for the castle.

"Adieu, my lord. May the holy saints have you in their keeping, and send you such consolation as will enable you to bear this severe affliction with Christian fortitude.

"RESPECTFULLY,

"SIGISMUND ROSENBURG."

There was silence several moments after the voice of the priest ceased to be heard.

It was ended by the marquis saying, in a broken voice:

"And this is the end of him who was once my pride and hope! His childhood was so promising that I looked forward to his maturity with the sanguine belief that he would prove worthy of our ancient name. He disappointed me grievously, for self-indulgence was the besetting sin of his nature, and Angostina lived only for enjoyment. The end is, that the record is closed, ere half the years allotted to man have passed over his head. I must resign myself, father; but this is a heavy blow to me, so worn out as I am."

"Pray, my son, and the Comforter will be sent to you. Bear up against this sorrow, and remember that you have still a son worthy to represent your house."

"True," murmured the marquis, "and had I known a little earlier, I would have recalled him to home and happiness. In this solemn hour I feel the nothingness of human grandeur, and I lament my late hardness toward Vittorio. Lucia, dear child, forgive me for the double wrong I would have inflicted on you. Stay with me to the latest, and I will never again refer to what has lately rendered you so unhappy. I rejoice now that this sad news came in time to prevent the sacrifice I knew I was forcing you to make, yet which I ruthlessly pressed on."

"Do not think of that now, my lord," said Lucia, through her tears. "I pledge myself to cling to you to the last as faithfully as if bound to you by the marriage vow. I cannot find words to thank you for releasing me from the painful necessity of giving my hand to one I have long regarded as a beloved father."

"Be my daughter then; as such I will care for your future."

Lucia sealed the compact by pressing her lips upon his wrinkled hand; and after a pause, the priest said:

"It becomes my duty, my lord, to inform you that the funeral cortège is on its way hither, and may arrive at any moment."

The marquis sighed deeply, and with some effort said:

"Give such orders for its reception as are necessary, father, and see that every honour due to the heir of Colonna is shewn. While my son's body lies in state, have masses said for the repose of his soul, and as long afterward as you may deem necessary. Let nothing be omitted that can shew respect to my lost one."

Father Boniface bowed, and was leaving the apartment, when the marquis again spoke:

"Send my valet hither; I am ill from this sudden shock, and I must retire to that couch from which I scarcely hope I shall ever again arise."

In a short time the afflicted father was removed to the chamber he was destined never again to leave, and within another hour the coffin of his son was laid in state in the grand hall, surrounded by sad and solemn faces.

The news soon went forth that the heir of Colonna had been brought home to lie among his dead kindred, and the tenants on the estate crowded to the castle to learn the particulars of his untimely end.

To their inquiries Father Boniface and the steward gave such replies as informed them of the supposed cause of Count Angostino's death, and in so doing, Baldoni wore so bewildered an expression that more than one said:

"I believe the steward grieves for the young count as if he had been his own son."

Such was the shallow decision of those who judged from outward appearances alone.

For days a funeral gloom enveloped the old castle, and the household moved noiselessly about their duties, impressed with the instability of life, and grandeur, in the sudden fall of this stately son of their master's house.

The marquis seemed to be daily sinking. Dr. Strozzi was summoned, but he could not rouse him from the leaden dullness which seemed to have settled on his faculties after the first passed away. The physician clearly saw that his vital powers were nearly exhausted, and nothing short of a miracle could again restore him to the enjoyment of life. His patient might linger on for months, but the feeble spark of vitality left in his frame he knew must die slowly out, and the most unremitting care would be necessary to sustain it. When he asked if the marquis did not wish his remaining son to be summoned to his side, he replied:

"I shall not die yet, doctor. There is more resistance in me than you think, and I can wait the return of Vittorio. He has by this time set out on his heraldic tour, and just now, the health of his wife is more important to him than anything else. A month hence he may be summoned to receive my last injunctions. By that time, he can leave Lady Venetia for a brief season, as it will not be well for him to bring her hither."

Dr. Strozzi very well understood why it was inexpedient to bring the newly-wedded bride to the home in which her rival dwelt; and he said no more; so it was settled that no intimation of his father's condition should be sent to Vittorio.

In spite of the gloom that surrounded her, and the critical condition of her protector, a heavy weight was lifted from the heart of Lucia, and she was almost happy in the assurance that she was to retain the freedom she so highly prized; that no ties save those of gratitude and affection were to bind her to this superannuated old man. A more unwearied nurse than she was never ministered to a feeble invalid, and daily she thanked and blessed her for her care.

A small room, adjoining that of the invalid, was fitted up for her, that she might be within call at all hours of the night and day, and her heaviest slumbers were broken by a single tap upon the silver bell which was placed beside him.

Sister Maria wished to share her watch, but the marquis preferred the young face that had so long hovered near his couch of suffering, and Lucia no sooner discovered this than she devoted herself unceasingly to him. It seemed to her that she could never do enough to prove to him how deeply she thanked him for releasing her from the late terror that had oppressed her.

The marquis was too feeble to attend to business of any kind, but Baldoni was careful to prepare the deeds which would transfer to Lucia a handsome independence after his master's decease, and he kept them in readiness to be signed in a moment of emergency.

With the occurrence of recent events his own hopes had revived, and he dared still to cherish the delusion that this provision would ultimately come into his possession as the future husband of Lucia, while she had almost forgotten that he had ever aspired to become her suitor.

In due time, the funeral of Count Angostino took

place, with all the pomp that could be displayed on so sad an occasion.

He slept peacefully in the vault of his fathers, while the two heartless plotters who had compassed his death extended their plans, and looked to nothing less as their ultimate reward than the entire control of the vast estates on which they had so long lived as dependents.

At the close of a long and earnest conversation between Baldoni and his daughter, which took place on the evening after the funeral, Pepita said:

"Only gain the clue to the secret, father; and the hoarded wealth of the family becomes yours and mine, for I claim an equal share with you. Nothing less will satisfy me. I hope you fully understand that."

"Nonsense! what use would you make of so much money, Pepita? I hope to find a million, at least, in the treasure chamber; and the half of that would be more than you could manage."

"There you are mistaken; for if I had it all it would not be more than I need to carry out my plans. Dispossession of Lucia, and I shall yet reign over the castle as the cherished wife of its heir. That poor little cripple Vittorio now claims as his wife cannot remain in the way of any one long. At least, she shall not trouble me a moment longer than I find it necessary to put her aside."

Her father regarded her with a species of shuddering admiration. He asked, in a whisper:

"Have you no remorse for the crime you have already committed, that you can speak thus of the poor young lady, Pepita?"

Her lip curled contemptuously.

"Remorse! pooh! that is drivelling! She has appropriated what I desire, and I, in my turn, will deprive her of what she values. She thinks her life beautiful because it is shared with Vittorio, and, no doubt, clings to it tenaciously. She will enjoy a few weeks of undimmed happiness, and before her dream is broken I shall kindly transfer her to a sphere in which we are told only perfect bliss is to be found. There! don't talk to me of remorse again. It is not in my nature to feel it."

"I wish it was not in mine," sighed her father, as he turned away and left her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

And shall the icy touch of death

Arrest the heart's wild waves of strife?

And the last feebly-owing breath?

To discard and to grieve life?

A FEW weeks passed away, and letters came from Vittorio announcing his safe arrival in France. He spoke of his bride as now dearest to him among women, and declared that the happiness of his life was secured by the society of so lovely a being as he found her to be. He made no reference to the announcement his father had sent him of his own intended marriage; Lucia's name was not even mentioned, and he seemed willing to ignore her existence altogether.

Enclosed in the count's letter was one from Lady Venetia to her new father, in which she spoke graciously of the tie that united them, and expressed her hope that, in her, the marquis would find a tender and affectionate daughter, who would unite with Vittorio in cheering the last years of his life. She declared that so soon as her amended health permitted, she would return to her native island and assume the responsibilities she had taken on herself with the position of his son's wife.

The eyes of the marquis were too weak to permit him to read at all, and Lucia was called on to inform him of the contents of these epistles.

She read the first one with the bitter conviction that the count despised her too much to sully his page by tracing her name upon it, and she felt assured that in the rebound of feeling his heart would open to the new love which so tenderly wooed its acceptance.

Lady Venetia's letter touched and pleased her. It was so womanly—breathed such a spirit of gentleness and devotion to him to whom she had plighted her vows, that Lucia felt she deserved to be happy.

She was even generous enough to wish that it might be so, although that happiness was gained at the expense of her own.

Her voice scarcely faltered as she read the lines, though her heart throbbed painfully and heavily for many moments afterwards.

The marquis said:

"In spite of the accident which marred the beauty of her form, Lady Venetia has matured into a lovable and charming woman. This letter is the reflex of a lovely soul, and my son must be happy while their union lasts. Lucia, can you not give Vittorio up to her for a brief season, for that poor girl cannot live many years. Your separation from him will not be eternal, though I would have made it so by rendering it impossible for my son to seek you again. I am glad

now that I was not permitted to carry out my cruel purpose of forcing you to stand to me in the relation of a wife. You will find your reward yet, my poor child, and I trust it will be brilliant enough to repay you for what I have made you suffer."

The tears Lucia could no longer repress, burst forth, and she passionately said:

"Do not speak thus, my lord! Do not hold out to me a hope that must spring from the grave of another, and that other so charming a being as the writer of this letter must be. I have resigned the count: all I now wish, or ask to claim from him, is the respect which I know he once felt for me. He does not even allude to me in his letter, and that proves to me how low I have fallen in his esteem."

"That can easily be rectified, Lucia. I will write to Vittorio myself, and tell him the whole truth. I am better to-day, and I think I shall soon be well enough to sit up and use my pen."

With her heart lightened by this assurance, Lucia left him to his afternoon repose. She returned to her own room to review her position, and endeavour to reconcile herself to the probability that in his new life Vittorio would become utterly estranged from even the memory of their brief and beautiful dream of love.

She put from her as a crime and a temptation the suggestion of the marquis that death might free him before youth was passed, and then he might seek her as his consolation. She would not permit herself to think of him save as the husband of Lady Venetia, and she fervently prayed for strength to resign him utterly to her rival—to regard him only as a dearly loved brother.

When the marquis again summoned her, she appeared before him calm, almost cheerful; but a single glance at his face showed her that a great change had taken place in his appearance. His features were sunken, and the vivid fire of his dark eyes had died out in a pale and feeble glimmer which wandered uncertainly from object to object. He feebly said:

"I believe death has drawn near me while I slept and dreamed of prolonged life. I feel as if I am sinking—sinking into the depths of nothingness. Yet there is something that must be done before I lose my hold on life. It is of vital importance that the *Secret* shall not die with me. Give me a cordial, child, and cause Baldoni to be summoned to my presence without delay."

Lucia impulsively said:

"Oh, my lord! if you have anything of importance to confide, can you not reveal it to Father Boniface, or even trust it to me, rather than Baldoni?"

As she spoke, she poured out a stimulating cordial, and after swallowing it, the marquis revived in a measure, and decisively said:

"You know nothing about Baldoni, Lucia, except that he does not please your fastidious taste. But in spite of that ill fortune, he is a good and faithful servant. The confidence I shall be compelled to repose in him will be held sacred, and I know it will be faithfully transferred to my son. Would it be fitting that I should entrust you with a mission which must bring you face to face with the count? As to the priest, he is too old; he might die before Vittorio's return, and this affair is too important to be tampered with."

At the reference to herself, a burning blush suffused the cheeks of Lucia, and she meekly replied:

"Pardon me, signor; I spoke without thought. I will obey you, and cause the steward to be summoned here without delay."

She left the apartment for that purpose, and scarcely noticing her return, the marquis remained buried in deep thought till Baldoni came in. He bowed low to Lucia, who immediately arose and glided from the apartment.

With a calm face, but a heart glowing with inward triumph, Baldoni approached the marquis, and in a carefully modulated voice, said:

"I trust you are still improving, my lord, though this sudden summons gave me a fright. I thought perhaps you wished to see the settlements I have had prepared for Lucia, and I brought them up with me."

"It is not that, though I am glad you have minded me of them. I will sign them when I have attended to something of more importance. Sit down, Baldoni; I have something to confide to you that weighs heavily upon my mind."

"The revelation is coming, and my reward is sure," thought the hypocrite, as he seated himself; and he began mentally to calculate how long his master could live.

After a pause, which seemed to him as if it would never end, the marquis spoke in a stronger voice:

"You have been long aware, Baldoni, that beneath this castle a secret receptacle exists, in which it has for generations been the custom of my family to hoard their superfluous wealth. In a country better



[LUCIA'S BRIDAL TOILETTE.]

governed than this, perhaps such a precaution would be useless; but the fund thus secured has been of signal service to those who have gone before me when this island was the prey of civil strife, or become the appanage of a new master. I have followed the custom of my ancestors in garnering my superfluity, and now the only one beside myself who possessed the family secret lies in his untimely grave."

Exhausted by the effort of speaking so long, the marquis paused to gain breath, and Baldoni, repressing his burning impatience, respectfully said:

"There can be little difficulty in transferring the clue to the treasure chamber to Count Vittorio. I will take charge of your written directions and faithfully transmit them to him."

The dimmed eyes of the old man scanned him keenly; but he saw nothing but honesty of purpose in the face before him. With some effort he said:

"I have nothing prepared which will furnish the clue of which you speak. I summoned you to employ you in writing out such directions as are absolutely necessary to enable Vittorio to find the entrance. I am convinced that I may safely trust you thus far, Baldoni."

The steward stifled every appearance of the exultation that throbbed in his avaricious heart, and gravely said:

"I had rather not undertake this responsibility, my lord. Through ignorance of the localities, I might make some trifling error which would completely lead your son astray, and the wealth of which you speak thus lie buried for centuries, unless it should be accidentally discovered. You are stronger than you think, signor; your late faintness was but the effect of sudden weakness, which is already passing away. You are looking much brighter and better than when I came in. If you will make the effort to trace the plan of the concealed chamber, and write such directions as will at once lead your son to the point designated, it will be much better than to trust a secret of such importance to one not of your own blood. I prize my reputation for honesty very highly, and I decline becoming the depository of this confidence; for Count Vittorio would have no assurance that I had not entered the vault before his arrival here, and appropriated a portion of its contents to my own use."

The marquis replied to this long speech by saying a little impatiently:

"Oh! my good Baldoni, there is no danger that so base a suspicion will fall on you, for, like myself, he count has implicit confidence in your integrity. But as you say, it is a weighty responsibility, and I will not thrust it upon you if I can gain strength

to follow your suggestion. Hitherto the knowledge of this chamber has been confined to the reigning marquis and his eldest son. Count Angostina has visited it with me, and knew how to find it again. I should have summoned Vittorio as soon as the knowledge of his brother's death reached me, but I did not wish to darken his honeymoon by such sad tidings: besides I then thought my own life would be prolonged at least a few months. Now it is too late; I should be dead long before my son could reach the castle, and such measures as are in my power must be taken to place this important secret in his hands without delay."

"True, my lord; I see the necessity, but you are fully equal to the effort to do so yourself. Let me give you some of this cordial, and in a few moments you will be able to wield a pen."

If Lucia's words had produced a momentary feeling of mistrust in the mind of the marquis, it was completely set at rest by the bearing of the steward. He said:

"Perhaps you are right, Baldoni. I do feel stronger since I took the last potion from Lucia's hand, and you may pour out another for me."

This was eagerly swallowed; and after the lapse of a few moments, the sunken eyes began to gleam with some of their old fire—the wan face to wear again the hue of life. The marquis presently spoke, in a stronger tone:

"Truly, this is a life elixir, for it seems to have restored vitality to one who felt himself slipping away among disembodied spirits. Now, my good Baldoni, prop me up with those pillows; bring me my writing case, and place before me what I shall need. My right hand has not quite lost its cunning yet, and I can still make my directions intelligible to my son."

With the ease and skill of a practised nurse, Baldoni placed his master in an easy position, piled the downy pillows at his back till he sat almost erect, and then spread out his paper before him, and placed the pen in his trembling fingers.

After a few efforts, the old man succeeded in tracing legible words upon the paper, and he said, with a cheerful smile;

"I can accomplish the task, Baldoni, and I am glad you urged me to attempt it. I shall die better satisfied knowing that to my son alone this important trust has been committed."

"Assuredly, my lord; Count Colonne is the only person entitled to receive it. I will now place myself beside the window, that I may not even be tempted to glance upon your work. It is not fitting that I, your

humble retainer, shall become the possessor of such information as that paper is destined to convey. I prize my good name above all things; and if any suspicion should even glance toward me, it would render me miserable."

"As you will, Baldoni; but I think you too squeamish on that point."

The steward placed himself near a window which looked out in the direction of La Tempesta, and the tranquil sea lying beyond, but he did not once cast his eyes upon them.

The position in which he stood screened him from observation from the bed, and with a furtive glance around, he cautiously drew from his pocket a small oval mirror, and held it in such a position that the paper placed before the marquis was distinctly visible to him.

By inclining his head a little, he could follow the slow movement of his master's hand, and he saw that a clearly defined diagram was carefully drawn, with minute directions written on the margin of the paper in an unsteady, but legible hand.

The marquis proceeded with difficulty, and half an hour passed before he threw down his pen, and said:

"It is finished at last. Give me another cordial, Baldoni, and then open the cabinet on your left hand, and follow my further directions."

The steward threw back the doors of an old-fashioned Venetian cabinet, richly inlaid, in which the invalid kept his most important letters and papers. He said:

"Touch the spring you will find exactly in the centre of the lowest shelf."

After some effort the right location was found, for there was no outward indication of its existence, and a small square opened, revealing an open well beneath.

"Put your hand in, and draw out the casket you will find there. It contains the jewels of my beloved wife, which were my bridal gift to her. I have kept them to present to Vittorio's wife, on her first visit to the castle. The casket will now answer a double purpose. I will place this important paper within it, and you shall at once forward the key to my son. When he arrives, he can open it himself, and thus, my good Baldoni, you will avoid all chance of suspicion falling on you."

"Thank you for these precautions, my lord. This arrangement will be perfectly satisfactory to me, and I will undertake the charge you are good enough to confide to me."

(To be continued.)



ORMOND'S UNEXPECTED MEETING WITH NOLAN.]

THE WARNING VOICE.

By the Author of "Mrs. Larkhall's Boarding School," "Man and his Idol," &c.

CHAPTER LXXXV.
THE CONSPIRATORS.

The kinsman lives
Whose only rumoured death gave wealth to him
And title. A hard creditor he proves.

Hunchback.

No escape—no hope. I'm wrecked by mine own act.

Ibid.

Nolan had swallowed up the eventful day, which few at Ingarstone were likely soon to forget.

Darkness had closed in; but the night was glorious with stars, and Orion, Charles' Wain, and the rest of the familiar constellations shone as brightly as if trouble and sorrow were unknown upon God's earth.

Though it was late, the lights were not yet out at Ingarstone. Nor was the village at rest.

Occurrences like those we have described interrupted the even flow of events, and it takes some time for things to settle down in their wonted state.

It was but natural that the old lord, who had that day asserted his position and taken possession of his estate, should be a little excited over his good fortune, and the ease with which he had accomplished the disagreeable task of ousting his kinsman.

This alone would have justified him in making that night. But there were other reasons, of which the villagers knew little, as they said among themselves, "T' old measter keeps it oop to-night, don't he?"

As midnight sounded from the clock-turret, and echoed solemnly through the buildings, the sound being taken up by a dozen little toy-clocks in different rooms and repeated with variations, the drawing-room to which we admitted the reader at the beginning of this history, presented a strange appearance.

Usually, aristocratic men and fair, exquisitely-attired women lounged there in luxurious ease. Usually, a subdued light just disclosed the elegant objects which crowded the room in studied confusion, and the prevailing murmur of soft voices was only interrupted by an occasional performance on the harp or the pianoforte. But it was not so to-night.

The room had been cleared of its elegancies—the costly objects usually scattered about it had been swept into a heap in one corner; and a new feature had been introduced, in the form of a four-leaved dining-table, brought up from the dining-room, and placed at a convenient distance from the blazing fire.

This table was covered with bottles, decanters, stone kegs, tobacco-jars, cigar-boxes, pipes, and heaps of papers.

At the head, in the place of honour, sat the true heir of Ingarstone; his long, angular form filling a porter's chair—one of those with huge circular tops, and covered with black leather, such as are found in the halls of most great houses. This he had taken a fancy to, and had ordered it to be brought in, intending to use it for the future, on the ground that he "saw no reason why his own porter should have the best chair in the house."

Leaning back in this cumbersome affair, he looked wasted and ghastly—much more so than in the morning. Moreover, his eyes gleamed with a peculiar fire—the fire of suppressed madness, ready to break out afresh at any moment, and certainly none the less likely to blaze from the spirit—strong, raw Hollands—with which it was being perpetually fed.

Around his lordship a strange group had assembled.

Each individual in it is well known to us, and we are, to some extent, acquainted with the singular chances which had brought them together.

On the right of the chair Flacker had his place, in virtue of his implied position as Bernard Ingarstone's legal adviser. It was rare that Flacker got intoxicated, and liquor did not affect him for a long time—he had taken so much of it.

Facing this agreeable spectacle was one scarcely less painful.

The man who sat doubled up in a chair on the left of the host was no other than the redoubtable Darn Crook.

At no time a pleasant object to contemplate, this man was singularly revolting in that gorgeous apartment. As usual, his dirty locks hung about his shoulders, and mingled with his great, ragged beard, while as to his attire—it was that of a beggar, so far as it could be seen, it being covered with a tattered cloak, lined with red, which he wrapped about him, even by the fire-side. And indeed he needed it, for though the warmest place had been given up to him, he shivered as with the ague.

Two other persons were present.

In one of these it was just possible to recognise the fresh, open, manly face of Andrew Nolan—just possible, and that was all. The ravages of drink, added to those of sorrow, despair, and above all, of revengeful feelings, had made short work of him. His hair was beginning to turn prematurely grey, his face was thin and seamed, and he had lost flesh to such an extent,

that his clothes hung on him as if made for a man twice his size.

At this advanced hour, he was happily oblivious of all that was passing—his head hung down, his eyes were closed, and he was snoring heavily.

By his side sat Captain Redgrave—Ormond's cousin—gay, lively, and the smartest and least offensive-looking of the party.

As the midnight hour struck, the captain, filled his glass from a bottle of old port before him, and said in a stentorian voice:

"Silence for my friend Flacker!"

The silence of the grave followed.

Then Flacker, having collected his long limbs, sprang up as if he had been galvanised, and shaking himself together, thus began:

"On this *suspicius* 'casion, don't y' know, there's a word or two to be said about the past, and—and the future. 'Past' is—no, 'future' is—right. About the past, then. What is it has brought us together here to-night, don't y' know? No common interest or chain of events. Gentlemen, Ingarstone is 'stunned' at what it's witnessed this day, don't y' know. 'Don't y' know' is right—no—'stunned' is right—beg pardon—'Ingarstone' is right! They think it's all a fort—fortuit—tuit—ous coming about of things—promiscuous—accidental like. No such thing, don't y' know. It's the result of deliberate plans, of long contemplated arrangements, of a deep-laid conspiracy. 'Conspiracy' is right. No. As a legal man, I retract that word: as a legal man, I say 'conspiracy' is wrong: and retracting that, I mean the same thing, all the same, don't y' know. Un'stand?"

He paused, and swaying to and fro, looked round inquiringly.

To his astonishment, Darn Crook started to his feet, and darted out a long, skinny, claw-like hand towards him.

"Sit down, Flacker!" he cried with sudden fiery energy; "what there is to be said, I'll say. In one point, my lord, Flacker is right. This is no common meeting. It is no ordinary tie which brings us here to-night, and makes us one in identity of interest. This, my lord, is a proud moment for you, since it sees you restored to that position to which you were born, and from which you have been so long wrongfully excluded. But it is no less a proud moment for me and for the rest of us here assembled. This is our hour of triumph, as it is yours."

The bent form of the man straightened and seemed to dilate as he spoke.

All regarded him with inquiring eyes, even Nolan waking to a drowsy consciousness of what was passing.

"The events of this day, my lord, consummate the work of my life. They have all sprung from one small seed, sown long years ago, but never neglected or forgotten. The name of that seed was—Revenge! It is a plant of hasty growth, my lord; and I who dropped the seed in sorrow, loneliness, and despair, have lived—as I long felt I should live—to sit under its leafy branches and to eat of its ambrosial fruits."

Intensity of feeling made this man express himself in metaphor.

They listened to him with amazement as he went on:

"It's a simple story, simple and common-place enough, as I and heaven know. Forty years ago a Redgrave did me a wrong. An ordinary wrong, as people thought it, resulting in nothing more serious than a woman's death. She was my wife; but what of that? I was only a poor man, and of what account's a poor man's wife? But I loved mine. She was more to me than anything else on God's earth. And when I lost her, I lost her through a Redgrave. I swore to have my vengeance of that cursed race, even if I should strike at them from my grave. Does heaven itself approve of such instruments of justice as I thenceforth became? I think so. Anyhow, it has helped me as I could never have helped myself. It is its doing that we are here to right, all bound to rejoice in the turn things have taken."

He paused for a moment, then resumed with increased vehemence.

"Look you," he said, "what has come of the few words I spoke that night, forty years ago. I took an oath of vengeance against the Redgraves. How have I kept that oath? Of the direct line there are but three living—Lady de Redgrave, Ormond, and his sister, Isidora. Of those three I have never lost sight, and what is their position? Ormond, looking forward to this day as one of supreme happiness, finds in it nothing but disgrace and ruin. His mother—or rather the woman who has so long played the part of mother to him—enfeebled in health, needs only this blow to strike her into the grave. The orphan Ingardstone—a penniless orphan, looking in vain to her ruined lover, Cecil Ingardstone, to rescue her from a position of toil or infamy. And all this is my doing—mine! I see it, I gloat over it, and thank heaven that the measure of my vengeance is full!"

The exulting, demoniacal tone in which this was uttered produced a strange feeling of disgust even among the depraved beings who took part in that midnight orgy.

A word which sounded strangely like "wretch?" escaped the lips of Captain Redgrave.

Darn Crook heard it.

He was conscious, too, of a want of sympathy with his feelings on the part of those about him.

"Your hearts do not go with me in this," he cried, angrily; "yet you have suffered, and revenge should be as sweet to you as to me. Has Andrew Nolan here cause to bless the name of Ormond Redgrave for separating him and happiness? Are you, captain, indebted to him for coming between you and your estate? As for you, my lord, I ought at least to calculate on your sympathy, since it is to my revenge, rather than to any Quixotic love of justice on my part, that you owe your present position. It was to add a nest to my hate—to let the proud, penniless outcast feel that he had allied himself to a woman poor and helpless as himself—that I preserved your life, and took measures to restore you to yourself. I ask no thanks. I expect no return; but it is right that you should understand why I glory in this as my hour of supreme triumph."

As the speaker ceased, Captain Redgrave, who had listened with obvious uneasiness, sprang to his feet.

"Look here!" he burst out. "Hang it! Look here! I'm neither a very good fellow, nor a very squeamish fellow; but—fire and fury—I didn't bargain for this! When Flacker let me into the secret of my cousin's illegitimacy, I'd a right to step in and take my own. His proud, upstart way, too, made me all the more ready to do it. But I'm a man, and not a brute; and I'll be hanged, drawn, and quartered, if it comes to that, before I'll make one in such a conspiracy against my own flesh and blood!"

"You don't mean—" began Darn Crook.

"Don't mean? But I do mean. By all that's good, I do mean what I say. You may be a very nice sort of man. Judging from what you've said, I don't doubt but you are—with a difference! But I'm not quite a brute. I've a little bit of heart left, I hope. It may be rough and hard; but I'm above this sort of thing! I'm a gentleman born, little as I may have acted on one sometimes. I'm an officer, too; and hang me if I'll lead myself to this sort of plot. No, no, no!"

"The captain's right," said Bernard Ingardstone, abruptly starting out of the gloom of the porter's chair.

"Right!" exclaimed Darn Crook.

"Right" is right!" murmured Flacker, bringing up his lower jaw with a snap.

"What do you mean by 'right'?" Darn Crook asked. "What is it to you, or you, or you"—pointing to one after another with his long forefinger as he spoke—"what motives I've been influenced by? They've been just, and right, and proper ones, and isn't that enough? I've brought about my objects by righteous and legal means, and what would you have more? But this is gratitude! I restore two men to fortune, I give a third the vengeance for which he burns, and what's my reward? Hard words and evil looks—scorn and abuse!"

"And serve you right!" cried the fiery captain. "Why should you look for gratitude? You've done all this, not for any love to us, or any desire to benefit us, but to gratify the vilest of passions. Are we to hold you to you then? No, by Jove, no! I, for one, am free to execute as I choose; and if I spare you, may I hear of it! That's all!"

Again the wild face of Bernard Ingardstone thrust forward out of the gloom of the porter's chair, and again he expressed his approval.

Darn Crook, standing between the two, glared from one to the other, and his green eyes, glowing under the yellow fringe of his eyebrows, seemed to dilate with passion as he said:

"It is what I have secured to each of your fortune, and this is my return!"

"Your just return," said the captain.

"Yes, if you propose to resign the advantages I have secured to you."

"And if not—still just?" Redgrave insisted. "As to resigning what is our due—that is beside the question. But one thing must be done—shall be done. It was from no vice on the part of my cousin Ormond that he withheld my property from me so long; and since that is so, I refuse to join in hunting him to destruction. I refuse, I say, to be made the tool of another's diabolical revenge, and I shall offer him such aid and assistance as his pride will suffer him to accept."

"Thank God there is one thing you cannot offer him!" cried Darn Crook, leering with malevolent joy.

"One thing?"

"Yes—legitimacy. You cannot free him from the shame of his base birth. That curse will follow him to his last hour."

"Fiend!" cried Ingardstone, interposing, "will nothing short of a whole life's misery satisfy your malice?"

"Nothing."

As Darn Crook spoke, Andrew Nolan raised his drink-maddled head, and fixed his bloodshot eyes on Ingardstone.

"And if it would," he grumbled, "you have made it impossible."

"I?"

"Have you forgotten Whitecrofts?"

"White—Tis an old place in Cheshire. I remember. But what of it?"

"You don't know? You have forgotten the Davenants who held it? You have forgotten Margaret Davenant?"

His lordship started and turned deathly pale.

"But what of this?" he asked.

"What? Margaret Davenant was Lady de Redgrave's sister!"

"Well?"

"And Ormond Redgrave's mother."

"No, no!"

"It is the solemn truth."

"And he knows this? Knows that I—that he owes this disgrace to me?"

"Yes."

His lordship looked agast.

"Why did you conceal this fact from me?" he demanded, turning fiercely upon Darn Crook.

"Oh, you were certain to know it soon enough," returned the old man, with a provoking chuckle. "The youth himself will take care of that. The discovery has driven him frantic."

"And he will vent his anger upon me. He will come here wild with passion—he will use violence!"

"I care not," retorted Darn Crook. "Enough for me that the breach between you cannot be healed, since the wrong done can never be set right."

"Never, never," moaned Bernard Ingardstone, burying his face in his hands. "I have myself rendered that impossible!"

The words were unintelligible even to Darn Crook; but he saw the anguish of mind which had prompted them, and his eyes glowed with demoniacal brightness.

CHAPTER LXXV

LEARNING THE TRUTH.

In the silence memories taunt me,
In the gloom these dead dreams haunt me;
But amidst the shades of night
Shines a maiden, robed in light. F. R. Nugent.

WHEN ORMOND REDGRAVE LEFT BEATRICE INGARDSTONE AT

the parsonage, he was ignorant of the true reason of her being there.

He supposed that the pastor had kindly offered the shelter of his house, as being near the church, at the disastrous close of the wedding ceremony, and that the lady had found herself too much agitated to return home.

Of the greater calamity—the loss of Ingardstone—he had at that time heard nothing.

Nor had the truth come to his knowledge when he listened to the painful revelation which Lady de Redgrave had felt it her duty to pour into his ears.

That Bernard Ingardstone, of whose very existence he had up to that time been ignorant, was his greatest enemy, he then for the first time learned; but he had no idea that his enemy was in secure possession of the mansion to which he had only that morning found himself the most welcome of visitors.

As little could he guess at the calamity which had reduced his wife to dependence on his exertions.

His wife!

How the blood tingled through his veins and overspread his face in burning flushes as he thought of her, of the wrong he had done her, and of the misery to which she was destined on his account.

That she should fall to shrink from him with the same loathing which the discovery of his base birth had inspired in himself he did not for a moment believe.

If he recalled, in the wild, tumultuous throbbing of his brain, the arguments they had sometimes had on that very question of ancestry and high birth, and if he remembered how she had often smiled at his enthusiasm on that point, it gave him little comfort.

"That was but idle talk," he argued with himself.

"Her sympathies are with her class. They must be so. She must share their pride and their prejudices. Besides, if there were no other objection, this loss of fortune—of the means to support her in the station she had so long adorned, would be fatal to me. No! We must separate. The tie which unites us must be dissolved. I cannot in honour oppose it, and the sooner I do her this simple act of justice, the better for my peace of mind."

These were some of the reflections which occupied his mind on this his wedding night.

Sometimes the shifting horror that had suddenly frozen the stream of his existence took other forms. He thought of his mother, as he still called the fond woman who had reared him with a loving tenderness almost more than maternal, and his heart smote him for his hard thoughts of her, brief as had been their duration, while the thought of the anguish she had endured on his behalf aroused all his commiseration. Thank heaven, her little property was safe! It was not imperilled by the revelation of that day.

Captain Redgrave might reduce him, Ormond, to beggary; but over her resources he had no power. And these he resolved within himself, she should continue to enjoy to the full. He would accept nothing at her hands. She had done enough, and sacrificed enough for him. There must be an end to this now. Besides, for him to take of her means would be to rob Dora, her own true daughter, for whom she must of right make provision.

At the bare recollection of Dora, a fresh pang shot through his heart.

What would be her position now?

That Cecil Ingardstone loved her truly and devotedly he knew right well. That she returned his affection was obvious to all who had ever seen them together.

But mutual love is too often powerless against divided interests.

"My misfortune must entail suffering upon her," he reflected. "Ingardstone will never consent that his son should marry into a family disgraced as I have disgraced it. Besides, what would he say? What would be the verdict of the cold, spiteful, censorious world on a man who permitted his son to select as his wife, one who was even remotely connected with the man from whom it was necessary to separate his daughter by a divorce? It is not to be thought of. The scandal would be too great for any man to brave, much less a man reared in the worldly school in which Ingardstone has been reared. And so poor, darling Dora must be sacrificed. It must be. There is no help for it."

Torn by thoughts like these, it was impossible for Ormond to rest.

He could not endure the sight of familiar faces. Every place seemed hateful to him. His only comfort lay in the approach of night, and in the thought that he might hide his shame under cover of the darkness.

So, leaving the village at sunset, he wandered for miles and miles along the deserted road, going he cared not whither, without a purpose, yet with the set face, the clenched hands, and hasty stride of a man bent on a life and death mission.

All this while his mind was slowly gravitating toward one fixed, settled idea.

His misery, and that which he had entailed on all those near and dear to him, was clearly to be traced back to one point.

It was the depravity, the wicked and heartless depravity of Bernard Ingarsone which had entailed these hideous consequences upon himself and others, including even the wretch's own kith and kin.

In the interlinking of events, it had come about that Beatrice Ingarsone owed her shame, her degradation and misery, to that rakish brother who was supposed to have perished as a raving maniac years and years ago.

For all Ormond knew to the contrary, he had so perished.

The Ingarsones had always spoken of him as dead. They sometimes recounted his exploits in the days of the Regency, when he was the Prince's firm favourite and esteemed buffoon; they had also alluded to the lamentable state to which his vices had reduced him, but it was always with the past that his name was associated, never with the present, and for this best of reasons, that up to the time of Ormond's introduction to the family, the fact of his existence was hardly suspected.

"Were he but alive and in my power," exclaimed Ormond, working himself into a state of furious excitement over the narrative he had that day listened to, "I would not spare him. His grey hairs should be no protection to him. The remembrance that his blood flows in my veins should only whet my revenge. As it is, I will devote the rest of my existence to exterminating those to whom I owe this wretchedness."

Following up this train of thought, he paused abruptly to ask himself a question.

"Who and what, in heaven's name, are these wretches? Why is it that I find myself surrounded by invisible foes, who have made use of every instrument, however unlikely, to humble and crush me? Am I indebted to my unnatural parent for this also? Did he hate me as the living witness of his infamy, and so organize some wicked plot for my destruction? Are these men only his agents, surviving the monster who set them in motion? From my very youth I have listened from time to time to the accents of that mocking, warning voice, for ever predicting the misery that has now come upon me. And why? Surely my enemies are not of my making. I have never intentionally done a wrong to man or woman. And yet, with diabolical malice, this secret of my birth is thrown like an exploding shell into my path at the very moment of my supreme happiness! My fortune is on the instant snatched from me by a man hunted up from the four corners of the globe to seize it. And to add to the keenness of my anguish, the blow comes apparently aimed—for, after all, it is only apparently—by the hand of my rival in Beatrice's affection, the only hand that could at such a moment add a pang to the bitterness of my shame and mortification."

These reflections embittered Ormond Redgrave's heart.

But he did not think of himself only. Selfishness was no part of his character, except to the extent to which it might enter into that ruling passion which had now become his curse.

Again and again he thought of Beatrice.

He pictured her anguish, her remorse, and the conflicting emotions which must rend her loving and sensitive heart.

The line of duty to be pursued towards her was a problem which he strove to solve, and ever strove in vain. His own sense of degradation withheld him, as we have seen, from taking advantage of his position; at the same time he was racked with apprehension lest she might regard his desertion from a false point of view. That she could believe he had purposely tried to entrap her into this unhappy marriage was incredible.

Yet why not?

That view was sure to be forced on her by her father; and even Cecil, his good friend Cecil, might come round to it, and then—then Beatrice—

No, no! The thought made his heart sick. He reeled at it. He could endure anything but that. Anything but the loss of her faith in his honour, his integrity, his boundless love and undying constancy.

Unconsciously, as these reflections thronged upon his mind, he retraced his steps, and taking a circuitous route, entered the well-known park, and drew so near that the architectural outline of Ingarsone was clearly discernible—black against the starlit sky.

It was very late now.

No one was stirring, and it was so still that a light breeze starting up at intervals, and rushing through the leafless trees, startled him, it was so like hard breathing and the rustle of drapery.

Lights gleamed in three windows only—those of the drawing-room.

The opposite wing—devoted to the sleeping apartments—was quite dark—her room among the rest.

He knew it well, and could see that the blind was not drawn; indeed, the window itself was a few inches open.

"Still at the parsonage?" he asked himself, with some alarm.

As he spoke, one of the great gates leading to the house swung open with a hoarse creak.

Ormond was near, and looked towards it.

He saw that a man came out, swinging a lantern by his fore-fingers, and reeling from side to side in a drunken and unsteady manner.

The porter who had let this man out, said, "Good-night, sir."

"Good-night!" cried the other, in a thick, husky voice.

Then the gate banged to.

In spite of its disguise, Ormond recognized the voice which had uttered the "Good-night!" He knew it was that of Andrew Nolan, and the idea of his coming from that place at that hour moved him beyond control.

Two strides brought him to the other's side. At the same moment the lantern was raised, and by its light, the faces of the rivals were clearly shown—their glaring eyes, quivering lips, set teeth.

Ormond first spoke.

"So," he said, "you have gained your end?"

"If you mean your disgrace—yes."

The surprise seemed to have sobered him, and he spoke without difficulty.

"And as your reward, you are again tolerated here?" Ormond hissed out.

"Welcomed, you mean," sneered Nolan.

"Oh, yes, yes! welcomed no doubt—welcomed by Ingarsone!" the other exclaimed.

"Ay, by Ingarsone, the Ingarsone!" said Nolan, with a meaning emphasis.

"The Ingarsone?" Ormond repeated, puzzled by something in the look that came into his rival's besotted face.

"Yes!" exclaimed Nolan. "You are cunning, crafty, heartless, reckless, brutal. You cared no more for me than for the menial who trembled at your frown. You were porcelain—you with your ancestors, your pedigree, and the rest of it: I was only common earth, mere Staffordshire beside your Sévres. And she believed this. She gave up her poor, weak, woman's heart to this fiction; and what's the end? She has linked her fate with a base-born penniless beggar. Oh, chafe at you will, 'tis so; and when he seeks to grasp her fortune, Bernard Ingarsone turns up!"

"Bernard—Ingarsone?" Ormond gasped.

"Yes! the elder brother!"

"He has returned?"

"What! you don't know it?"

"He is here?"

"Here! in his own home."

"And his brother?"

"Why not his brother's daughter?" Nolan asked with a sneer.

"Both, both," cried Ormond; "where are they?"

"Turned adrift, homeless, starving, dying in the nearest ditch, for all I know or care."

"Fiend!" shouted Ormond, rushing upon his pitiless rival.

Nolan, only half-sobered, dropped the lantern, and staggered back. The other made one attempt to follow him as he disappeared in the darkness, and only one. Then suddenly stopping, he dropped his hands.

"I am a fool!" he muttered. "This thing is not worth my rage: it is Bernard Ingarsone to whom I have to look."

And he hurried off in the direction of the wall surrounding the garden.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

INEXPLICABLE MYSTERY.

"Tis wondrous strange! The like was never heard of.

Henry VI.—Part III.

BREAKFAST was over at Ingarsone parsonage.

The guests who honoured it with their presence, for it was felt as an honour by the pastor and his wife, had not partaken of that meal with the family. It was felt that their troubles were too great to be obtruded on by others, and they were permitted to enjoy the privacy of the rooms appropriated to them unmolested.

For this, both Ingarsone and his daughter were thankful; the more so as the clergyman was a comparative stranger, having only received the living a few months. His name—by the way, was Bates: brother to the surgeon who attended Donna Ximena, in her last moments, at the railway station.

It need hardly be stated that the guests had passed a sleepless night.

Sudden reverses of fortune, great and overwhelming calamities like those they had experienced, do not burst upon their victims like prodigious waves, without disturbing the agreeable, onward flow of ex-

sistence. Ordinary tasks become inexpressibly irksome food nauseates, sleep is impossible.

Humphrey Ingarsone had often boasted of his philosophy; and having nothing to try him, imagined himself equal to any trial.

"The joys and sorrows of life," he was accustomed to say, "depend, after all, greatly on the imagination; they are not real, only relative. One man's happiness is another man's disgust."

Now he had discovered his mistake.

He had discovered that it requires little philosophy to bear the misfortunes of others; but a great deal more to suffer and endure when the suffering and endurance fall to our own lot.

Not once had he closed his eyes all the past night.

Contemplated, calmly and deliberately, in the solitude of his chamber, the calamities which had overtaken him assumed a terrible magnitude. Rank, fortune—everything gone, and Beatrice sacrificed to a man whose position was as hopeless as his own! These were real troubles, and they came upon a mind little prepared to support them. If, in place of the flimsy philosophy on which he relied, and which served very well to point epigrams and season conversation with, he could have brought the humble faith of a Christian to bear on this hour of trial, how much better would it have been for him!

As it was, he had only one comfort. The fixed idea that Beatrice should be divorced blinded him to other considerations; and again and again he congratulated himself on the happy fortune which had placed his daughter's wedding presents in his hands, and rendered them available for that purpose.

How it might affect her he did not stop to consider.

That her feelings might be different to his own he never regarded as a possibility; that she should have any idea of clinging to a mere nobody, who had grossly deceived and betrayed her, was one of those monstrous notions which he could not be expected to entertain a moment.

When they met at the breakfast-table, he was shocked at the appearance which his daughter presented. She also, it was obvious, had watched the whole night long. Her face was pale and wasted—her eyes red and swollen, the effect of tears; and she was nervous and tremulous, as if after a long illness.

"My child!" he cried, taking her hand and pressing it tenderly. "This is a sad trial—a monotonous sad trial, surely—but we must bear up. We—we—"

And he fairly broke down.

"He has not been, father," said Beatrice, faintly.

"I expected as much."

"Nor sent."

"No. Not a line—not a word. Just as I said."

"Cruel! cruel!" she muttered, more to herself than to her father; but he caught the words.

"Never mind, Beaty dear," he said. "Thank heaven, we can set all that right. Your jewels will be more than enough to—"

"Oh, father!" she burst in. "Spare me, I entreat—spare me! Spare me!"

He looked at her with an incredulous stare.

Neither her emotion of the over-night, nor the evident torture which this allusion to the possible divorce now gave her, served to open his eyes. He did not feel as she felt, and could not understand emotions so foreign to his own heart. All his anxiety was to get rid of a disgrace: he did not comprehend that this disgrace, as he called Ormond, was dearer to her than the whole world besides, and that in him all her happiness, present and to come, was centred.

There was, however, no time to indulge surprise. A tap at the door startled both; yet it was only Aggy Crofts who entered.

She was full of excitement. Her black eyes were unusually round and staring, and her short breath and panting bosom showed that she had come in great haste.

"Oh, my lord! Oh, my lady!" she began.

"Why, what now? What has happened?" asked his lordship, quivering at the bare thought of some fresh disaster.

"Mr. Bernard Ingarsone—begging his pardon, and yours, my lord"—there was an obvious perplexity in the girl's mind as to who ought to receive the title of honour—"he have been and gone and disappeared."

"Disappeared!" cried both Ingarsone and Beatrice, in a breath.

"Yes. Nobody knows when or how; but it's quite true. And there's such a to-do at the house, my lord, as never was known. Some think he has had his mad fit on again, and gone wandering away no one knows where. And some think he has been—"

She stopped short, and put her hand to her mouth as if vexed at having said so much.

Humphrey Ingarsone, all excitement, bade her go on.

"Well, my lord," she resumed reluctantly, and evidently with an eye to the effect her communication would produce on her lady, "some think that there have been foul play."

"What more likely?" cried his lordship. "Surrounded by men of the worst character, sharpers, swindlers—goodness knows what—what guarantee of safety had he? Why shouldn't they rise against him at any moment, and rob him, ill-treat him, place his life in jeopardy? 'Tis the most natural thing to have happened. Most natural thing in life."

"Oh, I hope not, my lord; I do hope not!" cried Aggy; "such awful things have been going on that it's enough to make one's hair stand a end; and now, if anything should have happened—oh, dear! I can't think of it—I don't dare."

The perturbation of this strong-minded young person was excessive—almost too excessive, those present might have thought, had they been calm enough to regard her closely.

But if she was nervous, fidgetty, and ill at ease, Ingarstone was, on his part, flushed with excitement, and Beatrice regarded the communication just made, not without perturbation. She could not fail to realize, as in a flash of thought, the vast importance of this piece of intelligence, in its bearing upon her father's fortunes.

If the newly-arrived heir to Ingarstone had yielded again to his old enemy—if, in other words, his mind had once more failed him, the path was cleared for their return to the old house, and the horizon of the future might brighten, even in spite of the one dark cloud which hung so threateningly over it.

The old man was keenly sensible of this also, and at once called for his hat and cloak, that he might go forth directly to inquire into the particulars of this strange rumour.

"You will stay with your lady," he said, addressing Aggy in the kind tone he had adopted from the moment that she displayed her fidelity by bringing the wedding presents on which so much depended, and which she had, in fact, carried off for her mistress.

"Ye-es," she replied reluctantly.

"You are not going to abandon us, Aggy?" he asked, noticing her hesitation.

"Oh, no, no," was her hasty rejoinder. "I will stay with pleasure, my lord."

And she proceeded to busy herself about the room.

In a few minutes Ingarstone had quitted the house, and was on his way to the family mansion.

His excitement was palpable; but while speculating on what was likely to happen, he yet gave more than one thought to the strange behaviour of his daughter's maid.

"I half fancy she had something to say to me," he mused; "that she wished to speak with me alone."

His sagacity was not at fault.

This had been Aggy's desire. She was brimming over with a piece of news which it would have been as well to impart to his lordship; but which she could not for the world have breathed in Beatrice's hearing.

On crossing the park, Ingarstone found the gate of the garden, which had yesterday been closed, standing half open; that is to say, one of the iron leaves of it had been thrust back, and so left.

As there was no one to obstruct his entrance, he passed in, took the broad road winding through the garden, and so reached the stately gothic porch. The door leading into the hall was open; but no one appeared at it.

While he paused, hesitating whether he should enter, the echo of footsteps caught his ear; then two persons came out on the steps. One was Morris Holt, the other his son Tim, now the pride of his old age, the cherished first-born son, to whom he clung with all the more tenacity because the world was still disposed to frown on him for his past follies and misfortunes.

Father and son caught sight of their old lord simultaneously, and came forward with hasty steps to meet him.

"This is a strange business, my lord," said Morris, respectfully.

"It is true then?" asked his lordship.

"Quite true. Your lordship's brother has disappeared."

"Left the house?"

"It is supposed so; in fact, there's little doubt of it."

"Have inquiries been set on foot?"

"In all directions."

"And search is being made?"

"Yes, my lord; a party is gone to drag the weir, and several parties of foresters and gamekeepers have set off to beat up the woods."

"Nothing was seen of him at the railway station?"

"Nothing."

"And the fins round about,—can they give no information?"

"Not a living soul, my lord, so far as I can make out, has seen anything of the missing man, nor is there the slightest clue to be had as to where he is gone. It'll go hard with Mr. Redgrave if nothing should come to light."

"Hard upon Mr. Redgrave—which Redgrave?" said his lordship, in astonishment.

"Mr. Ormond Redgrave, my lord."

"Why, what in heaven's name has he to do with it? What has he done? Tell me."

"I ask pardon, my lord. I thought most like you knew all there was to know. Seems it was late last night 'fore the party broke up; but when Mr. Flacker was senseless from drink, and Mr. Nolan got obstinate and would go away, late as it was, then my lord was put to bed, and the house got quiet."

"Well?"

"Well, my lord, nothing was heard all night, only one of the stable-boys says the dogs woke him with their barkin', and he heard something very like a pistol-shot; but before he could think about it he was off to sleep again. Owing to what took place yesterday, it was lateish before the house was astir this morning; and when the servants got fairly about, they discovered, first that the window of my lord's room was open, then that there was blood on the sill of it—"

"Blood?"

"Yes; then that my lord had vanished out of his bed, and at the same time that Mr. Ormond Redgrave was lying insensible on the grass under the window, grasping a pistol in his rigid right hand."

"Incredible! Had the pistol been fired?"

"Yes."

"And what is the supposition about this?"

"Why, that he attacked and wounded my lord, and was knocked backward from the window in the act of firing the pistol."

"But how could my brother have escaped?"

"Ah, my lord, that's the question."

Without further parley, Ingarstone once more entered the house from which he had been so recently expelled.

(To be continued.)

ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "*The Hidden Hand*," "*Sel-Made*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE FUGITIVE'S SHELTER.

Long months have seen thee roaming
A sad and weary way,
Like traveller tired at gloaming
Of a sultry summer's day.

But soon a home shall greet thee,
Though low its portals be,
And ready kindness meet thee,
And peace—Ah! will it flee. *Percival.*

It is absolutely necessary that we leave Arthur Powis, waiting at the gate of Ceres Cottage, and go back and describe what had befallen Gladdys.

Gladdys, it will be recollect, had left London by the very earliest train, and consequently she arrived in Scotland in the evening. She took a hack at once, and, accompanied by Ennis, drove out to Ceres Cottage.

The sun was setting as the carriage drew up at the rustic gate.

How welcome, how peaceful, how pleasant the old house looked! Yes, even pleasant, although it stood among its bare trees, whose fallen leaves strewed all the garden paths.

Gladdys alighted at the gate, and paid and dismissed the carriage, and, followed by Ennis, walked up the straight, leave-strewn garden path that led to the door.

A ruddy, leaping, and glimmering light, like that emitted by the blazing of a wood fire, shone through the windows of the sitting-room on the right hand side of the front door, and added cheerfulness to the aspect of the scene.

Gladdys knocked—with her fist, for you remember that there was neither knocker nor bell at the rustic entrance; and while she paused for a response she distinctly heard Miss Polly exclaim in a scared whisper:

"Lor! who is that? Go to the door, Harriet; but be sure to ask who is there before you unlock it."

And the next moment, Gladdys heard the woman cautiously approach and demand:

"Who's there?"
"It is I, Harriet."

"Who is I?"
"Why, Harriet, don't you know my voice? I am Mrs. Powis, who used to lodge here about a year ago."

"Lor, Mrs. Powers, ma'am!" And down went the bar, and back went the bolt; and the key was turned in a trice, and there, in the open door, stood Harriet glowing with welcome.

"Lor, child! Come in out of the cold! When did you arrive? Who is that with you? Your waiting maid? Come in, do!—Lor, Miss Polly, if hero ain't

Mrs. Powers! Come in, my dears!" exclaimed Harriet, hushing her questions and ejaculations one upon the back of another, as she closed the door and hustled Gladdys and her maid into the bright old sitting-room.

The three old ladies who were sitting around the fire arose in a body, exclaiming simultaneously: "Lor! Mrs. Colonel Pollard, my dear, to think of seeing you here!"

"I glad you are as glad to see me as I am to come," said Gladdys, faintly smiling.

"Oh, yes indeed," replied the three old ladies together, as Miss Polly placed a chair and made the visitor sit down; and Miss Mitty untied and removed her bonnet; and Miss Jenny stirred the fire into a blaze.

But Gladdys saw that they were all three dying of curiosity to know what brought her there; how far she had come, and how long she meant to stay.

"Harriet, bring a candle in here directly—two candles, Harriet! and then put the kettle on, and broil that ham and make some nice toast—Mrs. Colonel Pollard always relished toast; and then come and set the table for tea. You'll stay to tea, my dear, I hope?" said Miss Polly.

"Yes, dear Miss Polly, I will stay to tea, and I will stay to sleep too, if you will let me," replied Gladdys.

"To sleep! Here, Harriet! stop a minute. Now, listen—the very first thing you do before you put the kettle on, you go and make a good fire in Mrs. Colonel Pollard's room, to air it well. And then go and do the rest I told you," said Miss Polly, anxiously.

When Harriet had left the room, the three sisters turned kindly questioning glances upon Gladdys.

"Dear Miss Polly, and dear good friends! I want to stay with you altogether, if you will let me! You will let me, will you not?" inquired the poor hunted child, in a pleading, tearful tone.

The three old ladies did not reply—not from unwillingness to grant her request, but from amazement that it should have been made.

"You will let me stay, will you not? I shall not be a trouble or an expense to you. I will wait on myself, indeed I will! And I should say that I am able to pay you well, as I certainly will do if I stay; only I know that would be the very last consideration with you. Will you let me stay?" pleaded Gladdys, anxiously, earnestly, tearfully.

"Why, laws! yes, to be sure we will," said Miss Polly; and both her sisters chimed in and agreed with her.

"Surely you are as welcome as flowers in May. It wasn't no doubt about nothing of that sort as was on our minds, only we was a wondering why—why?"

"Why I wished to stop at all?" smiled Gladdys. And oh! how faint and sad her smile was!

"Yes, not to deceive you, we was."

"Well, my dear Miss Polly, I will tell you all about it to-morrow. It is such a long, dark, sinful story! And I am so tired to-night," pleaded Gladdys.

"Well, you sha'n't be bothered to-night. And so you sha'n't. Soon as ever your room is aired and you get your tea, you shall go to bed. Is this young 'oman your maid-servant?"

"Yes."

"Is she to stay with you?"

"If you can accommodate her, she will remain with me until she can procure another service."

"Oh, she can stay as long as you like, for that matter, Mrs. Colonel Pollard."

While Miss Polly and Gladdys were still talking, Harriet came in and set the table for tea, which was soon served.

After tea, Miss Polly took up a candle to show Gladdys to her room.

"But where is your luggage?" she inquired, as they passed through the front passage, and she looked about her in the expectation of seeing boxes and trunks.

"We have all that we require there," said Gladdys, pointing to two well-stuffed carpet-bags that Ennis was bringing after them.

Gladdys found a cheerful fire in the fireplace, and a clean, well-air'd bed waiting to receive her.

And there was a neat and comfortable pallet prepared for Ennis in a warm corner.

Miss Polly bade her young guest a loving good-night, and left her to repose.

Late alone, Gladdys knelt down and thanked heaven for bringing her safely through her perilous flight to this home of peace.

And then she went to bed and fell asleep. And Ennis followed her example.

The next morning, after breakfast, when Gladdys was sitting alone with the three sisters beside their bright fire and well-swept hearth, she told them the oft-repeated story of her wrongs.

The sisters listened, and wept, and wondered.

"Well, my heart always did misgive me that she was a bad one," said Miss Polly, beginning to whimper.

And then, notwithstanding the nods and winks and head-shakings of her two sisters, who did not seem to approve of the confession, she made a clean breast of it, and told Gladdys of the wicked part that she, Miss Crane, had been beguiled into playing, when she gided and abetted Mrs. Jay in her abduction of the young wife of Arthur Powis.

"But oh, my dear, she was such a fair-spoken woman, and she persuaded me as it was all for your good! But for all that, I do believe in the bottom of my heart I always did misdoubt her; only I had no reason to go upon! and so I didn't dare to say nothing agin her. But anyway, it almost killed me! After you went away, I was that uneasy about you, you can't think! I writ and writ and writ to Mrs. James Lewis to ask after you, and I directed the letters so particular to Katy Idyls, and I waited and waited and waited, but I never got no answer to none of them. And oh! to think all that time that she was treating you so! And now, what are you going to do?"

"I am going to put advertisements in all the papers, calling on Arthur Powis to answer; and offering rewards to any one who can give authentic intelligence of him. That is all that I can do at present. For unless I find Arthur, I cannot shake Mrs. Llewellyn in her position as my guardian before the expiration of my minority."

"Yes, I think that is very prudent. And if I can help you anyways, I'll do it. But that wasn't exactly what I meant when I axed you what you was a-going to do. I meant what was you going to do about me? Was you going to forgive me, or what?" whimpered Miss Polly.

"Forgive you! Dear, dearest old friend, what a word to come from your venerable lips! Forgive you! Why I know that you love me, and that you did everything for the very best."

"Well then, and so you do forgive me," whimpered Miss Polly.

"Forgive you! Why, dearest, best old friend, I thank you—I thank you for all your loving kindness, from first to last, to a poor motherless and fatherless girl," said Gladdys, holding out her hand.

Miss Polly seized it, and covered it with kisses and tears, as she sobbed out the words:

"If this sin't a-heaping of co-coals of fi-fire on my tea-head, I don't know what is."

Gladdys kissed her, and went up-stairs to put on her bonnet and shawl. She was going out, to begin that very day the work of finding Arthur.

When she was quite ready to start, she looked into her purse to see whether she had money enough to pay for the advertisements. She found but five pounds in change. Thinking this sum insufficient, she went to the carpet bag in which she had deposited the roll of bank notes which formed the bulk of her available funds. She slipped her hand to the bottom of the bag, but failed to find the parcel of which she was in search. She then took out all the contents of the bag, but the parcel was not among them. Next she searched the other carpet bag, but with no better success. Then she looked about the room, but in vain. Still she felt no misgivings on the subject. The parcel was somewhere in the room, she thought. So she rang for Ennis.

The girl came running up the stairs.

"Ennis," said her mistress, "what have you done with that roll of bank notes that was in the bottom of the carpet bag?"

"I haven't done anything with it, ma'am," replied the girl.

"What—didn't you unpack it from the bag and put it away somewhere?"

"No, indeed, ma'am. I never opened that bag. Everything that we wanted for the night was in the other bag."

"I know that; but you must have put away that money somewhere and forgotten all about it. Try to remember."

Ennis assumed a cogitating expression of countenance, and seemed to "try to remember," not, however, with the faintest hope of recollecting anything to the purpose, but in deference to the directions of her mistress.

Nothing came of it, however; so after a few moments Ennis lifted her head, and looking her questioner honestly in her face, she answered.

"It is no use, ma'am; I can't remember what I never did, for indeed I never touched that roll of money."

Gladdys looked in her eyes, and saw that she spoke the truth. And for the first time since missing the money, Gladdys became seriously uneasy.

"Help me to look for it, then, Ennis. It must be about here, somewhere, you know."

They commenced the search.

They looked through both carpet bags again. They

shook out all the clothes. Then they looked into the bureau drawers, on the dressing-table, in the wardrobe, about the bed; in short, they looked into every probable, possible, and impossible place, and all to no purpose—the money could not be found.

Finally they looked into each other's faces in the utmost dismay.

"Has anybody been in the room beside yourself, Ennis?" inquired Gladdys.

"Yes, ma'am; Harriet has been here to help me make the bed."

"Call her." Ennis went down stairs to summon Harriet, and returned not only with Harriet, but with the three Misses Cranes, who, having heard of the missing money, came up full of consternation.

Harriet, being questioned, declared that she had not touched the carpet bags, nor seen the money.

And the truth and honesty of Harriet was beyond dispute.

"I must have lost the money in the train, then; though how I could have done so passes my comprehension," said Gladdys.

"How much was it?" inquired Miss Polly, sympathetically.

"Fifteen hundred pounds," said Gladdys with a sigh.

Miss Polly started as if she had been shot, reeled backwards, and dropped into the nearest chair, gasping breathlessly:

"Fifteen hundred pounds!"

It was an inconceivable sum! The loss of it must break half-a-dozen banks, and cause a panic in the money market.

Miss Polly had her own small savings stored up in the bank.

"I wonder if it will hold out, or whether I hadn't better draw my money," she said.

And then she covered her head with her apron, and burst into tears, sobbing:

"Fif—teen hun—dred pounds!"

"Don't cry, Miss Polly," said Gladdys, totally missing the point of her grief. "Don't cry. After all, the loss of this money is only a temporary inconvenience to me. In little more than a year, which will soon pass away, I shall come into the possession of Cader Idris and its vast revenues, when the question of a thousand pounds more or less will be a mere trifle. Believe me, I shall not let it trouble me. The only difference will be that, instead of leading an idle life this year, I shall have to do something to support myself—that is all."

And, so saying, she drew on her gloves, and set out on her long walk to the newspaper offices.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

FREEDOM AND HOPE.

Oh, Liberty! thou goddess, heavenly bright!
Profuse of bliss, and teeming with delight!
Sensual pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling Plenty leads thy laughing train.
Addison.

Like the gloom of night retiring,
When in splendour beams the day,
Hope again my heart inspiring,
Doubt and fear shall chase away.
Anon.

RELEASED from the paralyzing influence of Mrs. Llewellyn's treatment, the mind of Gladdys recovered all that natural strength and elasticity that misfortune had no power to crush and destroy. She saw what was before her; she knew what she ought to do; and she acted with promptitude. She went first to the office of the principal newspaper, and inserted two advertisements. The first ran thus:

"A LADY, well qualified to teach the common and higher branches of an English education, with the French and German languages, vocal and instrumental music, and drawing and painting, would be happy to meet with an engagement as governess in a private family, or as assistant-teacher in a school. A letter addressed to G. P., Post-office, till called for, will meet with prompt attention."

Gladdys would have liked to have added—"references given and required." But, far away from all her old family friends and acquaintances, a stranger, a widow in fate and not in fact, and lying under the ban of Mrs. Llewellyn's calumnies, to whom could poor Gladdys possibly refer?

She would have liked also to have put in a third advertisement, offering a reward for any information concerning Lieutenant Arthur Powis; and to have inserted all three of these advertisements in many other papers, to have given them a much wider circulation, and a much greater prospect of success. But her funds had given out, or nearly so, since she had but two pounds left; and she felt that she could not

even spend a shilling to pay a carriage to take her back to Ceres Cottage.

However, these limitations to her power did not depress her spirits, which, indeed, had taken a vast rebound from the crushing weight of Mrs. Llewellyn's presence and oppressions.

To a sensitive being like Gladdys the very atmosphere of a base and wicked person has a depressing and killing power. And the escape from it is like the change from death to life.

No joyous, wild wood bird, let loose from its cage, to fly, singing towards the sun, was ever gladder to be free than Gladdys, as she gaily tripped along, that glorious autumn morning, towards her suburban home.

The true, she had no clue to Arthur; but she felt from the bottom of her heart so sure that he was still living; and she hoped everything, for she was now out in the world, and free to seek him!

True, also, she had just lost fifteen hundred pounds, all her available funds; but what of that?

She was young, elastic, and free to work for her living, and she could do so until she should come into her estate or find Arthur; and one or both these events must happen in little more than a year, and might happen sooner.

And who could not struggle on for one or two years with such a goal in view?—and being free to do so?

"Oh!" said Gladdys to herself, drawing a deep breath of the exhilarating air as she walked through the morning sunshine; "oh what a delicious thing it is simply to be free! to go where I please, and to do what I like, with no one to restrain and oppress me. Ah! from my own short experience of an 'honourable' bondage that was so very bitter to my soul, I have learned the worth of freedom! how it is the best thing on earth and even in heaven! the most glorious gift of God to man! Oh! I think I can understand now how whole holocausts of human beings have been offered up; how heroes have struggled, and martyrs died for that one idea of freedom! Once it was only a word, or an abstraction to me! now it is the greatest good in the world, worth all the treasures of blood and tears that have ever been poured out to gain it, or ever may be poured forth to retain it! And it was worth my twelve months' bitter bondage only to learn this practical lesson in the value of freedom. For which, thank God, for ever and ever!" exclaimed Gladdys, in the exultation of her recovered liberty, as she walked briskly through the brown, sunlit fields that lay between her and her chosen temporary home.

It was high noon when she opened the old green gate and passed up the leaf-strewed path that led to the cottage porch.

Miss Polly saw her coming, and hastened to open the door for her, saying:

"Come right in our sittin'-room, there's a good fire and a nice luncheon a-waiting for you. We got all ready for you because we knew you'd be cold and hungry after your long walk. Now, come right in," she repeated, taking Gladdys by the arm and drawing her into the sitting, or "sittin'"-room, as Miss Polly called it.

There was the bright coal fire blazing merrily; and the little round table covered with a white cloth and adorned with the best china; and there was the bright tea-coffee-pot and something covered up in a tureen on the hearth; and there was the old armchair drawn up on one side of the table and between it and the chimney corner; and last, not least, there was Miss Polly and her two sisters ready to welcome the young wanderer with all the love of a mother and two maiden aunts.

Miss Milly made her sit down in the chair and relieved her of her bonnet and her shawl.

Miss Jenny poked up the blazing fire to a still brighter blaze.

And Miss Polly set the coffee-pot and tureen on the table, saying:

"It's only coffee and stewed oysters, but it will do you good after your long walk. It was so fort'nate the oysterman come by this way this mornin'. And now what are you a-crying about? Has anyone hurt your feelings?" inquired Miss Polly, setting down the tureen, and staring in astonishment at her guest, whose eyes were filling with tears.

"Oh, no, no," said Gladdys, smiling brightly through those tears—"oh, no; but it has been so long since I have had such kindness shown me! such true, tender, genuine kindness as yours! and it makes me think of my poor mo—mother," she added, with a sob. "But—she's in heaven, and she watches over me, I know." She ended by dashing the tears from her eyes, and smiling again.

"Yes, that she do watch over you! You may take your Bible to that! And who knows but it is her spirit a-whispering in our hearts always to be good to her child," said Miss Polly, whose faith was very strong.

"And don't you fret yourself about losing that mokey, though it really was a blow; nor likewise about how you're a-going to get along; for as long as we've got a roof to cover our own old heads—which, by the mercy of the Lord, we hope to have all the days of our lives—you're welcome to your own share of it, my child, freely welcome," said Miss Milly, affectionately.

"And as long as we've got a loaf of bread, or a penny, we are willing to divide it with you," added Miss Jenny, who felt called upon to bear her testimony to her good will for the desolate girl.

"I knew it! Oh, I know it so well! And I thank you! Oh, I thank you from the very depths of my heart! Oh, dear old friends, take care of yourselves, and try to live through a long and green old age; so that when my own prosperous days come again, I may prove myself as good a daughter to you as you have proved yourselves mothers to me," said Gladys, with deep emotion.

And she felt an accession of impatience to come into the possession of her property, that she might prove her gratitude and love to these kind old ladies in some useful and substantial manner.

The next morning Gladys walked out again. Oh! what a privilege and what a pleasure she felt it to be, to walk out every day, unhampered, in this glorious autumnal weather. She went to the office to get a copy of the morning's paper to see if her advertisements were in all right.

Yes! there they were, but by some strange chance placed one under the other.

"They ought to have put the one about Arthur in the 'Personal' column, and the one about the situation in the 'Educational' column. Instead of which they have put them both under the head of 'Wanted.' I am sorry; for anyone reading them one after the other would know they came from the same person, because the initials are the same, and they might think there was something very wrong about the governess who was advertising for a young man, especially as she says nothing about references! Heigh-ho! I wish I had used different initials in the governess advertisement. But it is too late now! And anyway I won't, I won't be downcast. I am free, thank heaven!" exclaimed Gladys. And she hurried blithely on until she reached the "Cottage of Peace," as she mentally named the quiet home that had opened its kindly doors to shelter her storm-tossed body and soul.

There the same kindly welcome, the same bright fire, and the same little luncheon-table, awaited her. "Only it's a cup 'o' tea and a broiled bit of ham today. The oyster-man didn't come round," said Miss Polly.

"And if he had, we wouldn't a' p'soned you out with one thing over and over. People likes a change of dishes," observed Miss Milly.

"And the ham is of our own curing," said Miss Jenny.

When Gladys had delighted the old ladies' kind hearts by doing full justice to the refection they had placed before her, she took out the newspaper, and showed them the advertisements.

Miss Polly put on her spectacles, and read them aloud, in a solemn voice, for the edification of her sisters.

And they listened, with folded hands, and downcast eyes, and sombre faces, as if they had been hearing prayers or exhortations read from their missal.

"Lor! you don't mean as you read these in, do you?" said Miss Polly, when she had read them.

"Yes," said Gladys.

"And did you make it all up?" inquired Miss Milly, setting her spectacles up over her cap, and looking at Gladys.

"Of course."

"All out'n your own head?" questioned Miss Jenny, doubtfully, stopping with her knitting.

"Why, certainly," smiled Gladys.

Whereupon the three simple sisters, each in turn, took the newspaper, and stared at the two advertisements; and then all stared at Gladys, as if both she and her productions were something wonderful.

Meanwhile, Harriet came in to clear off the luncheon-table.

"Oh, I say, Harriet, look here! What do you think? Mrs. Colonel Pollard has written something for the paper, and it is printed! It is indeed!" said Miss Polly.

"I always knew she had a head!" said Miss Milly.

"Read it for Harriet, Polly," put in Miss Jenny.

Harriet posed herself, with her arms crossed and her head bent down, to listen becomingly.

"But, oh, see here!" said Miss Polly, hesitating, "we ought to call Ennis in. It is a pity to slight her."

Ennis was solemnly summoned, and stood by the side of Harriet, to listen to something very good.

And Miss Polly adjusted her spectacles, and in a cracked and chanting voice, intoned the two advertisements rather than read them.

"Now what do you think of that?" demanded Miss Polly, triumphantly.

"It's beautiful!" exclaimed Harriet.

Ennis said nothing.

"And she writ it herself; and made it all up out'n her own head, too; and what do you think of that?"

"It's astonishing!" said Harriet.

"It is," said Miss Polly, solemnly folding up the paper, and taking off her spectacles.

Gladys went every day to the post-office to inquire for letters addressed to G. P.

She was full of hope, and she enjoyed those morning walks, through the brilliant sunshine and exhilarating air as only a freed captive could enjoy them.

Several days passed without her getting any response to her advertisements. At last it became a little depressing to hear at the post-office window in answer to her daily inquiry:

"Any letters for the initials, G. P.?"

"Always the same chilling:

"No, Miss!"

For the youthful and even childish style of her beauty naturally led all strangers who were obliged to speak to her to call Gladys by this girlish title.

But every morning Gladys started out with the same buoyant hope; and though that hope was daily doomed to disappointment, yet every noon, in returning home, she met the same cordial welcome, the same bright fire, and the same tempting luncheon. And above all, the same ready sympathy.

"Any letters to-day?" would be Miss Polly's very first question on meeting her.

"And when day after day she answered:

"No."

Miss Polly lost patience, and indignantly exclaimed:

"Well, all I can say is, if people don't answer them beautiful things, people's a fool, that's certain!"

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

ENTRAPPED.

Oh! what a change comes over that young heart, Where all was joyous, light, and free from care! All thoughts of peace do for a time depart, And yield to rage and anguish and despair!

Watson.

Thus doth the ever changing course of things, Run a perpetual circle, ever turning, And that same day that highest glory brings, Brings us unto the point of back returning.

Daniel.

At last, on the Saturday of the second week, Gladys started for the post-office with her lately ecstatic hopes somewhat reduced by continual disappointment; yet consoling herself withal, by the reflection that, come woe come woe, she was—free! When she got to the post-office, and asked the usual question, however, the smiling clerk, who had grown familiar with the pretty, eager, childish face of the daily visitor—put three letters into her hands! All had come at once! It never rains but it pours, you know!

Gladys hastily seized them. She could not wait until she had got home, or even until she had left the post-office. She hurried up into a corner of the entrance hall; and she tore open the letters one after the other, and hastily glanced over them;—her first thought, her first hope being that they might contain news of Arthur.

No, but they did not! They were all answers to the governess advertisement. And Gladys, with a sigh of disappointment, thrust them all into her pocket and hurried home, that she might read them there at her leisure.

When she entered the cottage, Miss Polly met her as usual.

"Come in. It's chocolate and br'il chicken this time! I won't vex you by asking you if you've got any letters; because I know it ain't no use," said the old lady, drawing her guest into the cosy room.

"Oh! but I've got the letters at last, Miss Polly!" said Gladys, as all glowing red from the frosty air without, she sat down before the fire, and began to draw off her gloves; while Miss Milly took off her lenon.

These poor childless old ladies lavished all their unclaimed maternal love upon this bright young creature, who had sought their protection.

"Letters!" exclaimed the three sisters simultaneously and eagerly, as if the cause had been their own.

"Yes, indeed," said Gladys, gaily, "three letters! all offering me situations."

"Ah—hs! people's coming to their sensos, are they?" said Miss Polly, exultingly.

"Well, now take your chocolate and chicken, and then you may read them to us," said Miss Milly, considerably.

Gladys obeyed them, as she almost always did, with a sort of filial affection and reverence. And

when she had eaten and was satisfied, she took the letters from her pocket and put them on the table, and then she took up the first that came to hand and opened and read it.

It proved to be a letter from a widower, aged thirty-five, with one little daughter, aged four years, and who wished a personal interview with the advertiser, and promised—should that interview prove mutually agreeable—the most liberal salary, on condition that the lady would take charge of his house and of the education of his little daughter. He required no references and gave none.

Gladys panted with the letter in her hand, and her eyes fixed upon it, as if in perplexed thought. At last she looked up, and said:

"It appears to me that this is an improper offer. Of course I cannot take the situation of governess in the family of a widower, where there is no other lady—at least he mentions none—and only a little girl four years of age."

"Of course you can't, my dear. Keep house for a single gentleman, indeed! It is like his impudence to ask it! And his little girl only four years old! That's rubbish! What does she want with a governess to teach her the English branchers, and French on the harp, and that? It's all a trick! I wouldn't even answer his letter. Set him up with it, indeed! I'd treat that with silent corn-tempt!" said Miss Polly, emphatically.

"Let us pass on to the second letter," said Gladys, with a deep blush.

The second letter was of later date, and had come a shorter distance.

It proved to be from a maiden lady, who had three orphan nieces left to her guardianship, and who wished to procure for them an accomplished teacher, to whom she would be willing to pay a very large salary. But she required the most unquestionable testimonials as to the character and ability of the advertiser.

"There, now! I think that would suit you to a T, my dear," said Miss Polly, briskly.

"Yes—but you see this lady requires testimonials," sighed Gladys.

"Teasy—what's them?"

"References, Miss Polly."

"Deferences? Well, I reckon you'll give her all the deference she deserves! Give and take, you know! If she pays you respects, you'll pay her respects! I would not let that stand in my way!"

"It is not that, Miss Polly dear! The lady wants to bring letters of recommendation."

"Letters of recommendations? What, for the likes of you? Just as if you was a gal going about to him yourself at so much a month, and warranted not to steal the tea and sugar! Set her up with it, indeed! Who's she, I wonder? Can't be very respectable herself to be so suspicious of other people! Fling the impudent letter into the fire, and let's hear what's in the third one! There's always luck in number three, you know," said Miss Polly.

And her sisters were by no means backward in their sympathy, though they were silent listeners.

Gladys opened the third letter. This one proved to be from Dranesville, a village within a few miles; and it was dated on the preceding day.

"It is singular," said Gladys, as she read the date, "that these three letters, each coming from a different point, and bearing a different date, should have reached me all at once. But such things will happen sometimes, I know."

"Read it," said Miss Polly.

Gladys complied.

The letter purported to be from a wealthy widow lady, living in the neighbourhood of Dranesville, and having four little girls, between the ages of seven and twelve years, whom she wished to educate at home, and for whom she was anxious to engage a competent governess.

As the advertiser appeared to meet her views, she would be pleased to conclude an engagement with her.

She would offer fifty pounds a-year, the first year's salary, and increase the sum as her daughters advanced towards the higher branches of their education. If these terms should suit the advertiser, the latter would please to direct a letter to the respondent, saying at what time it would suit her to come to Dranesville, so that the respondent might send a carriage to the village to meet the advertiser and bring her to her destination.

The letter was written upon deep black black-bordered paper, and signed Elizabeth Fairbridge.

Gladys pondered over this letter, holding it in her hand.

"That's the place for you," said Miss Polly.

"I was only thinking," said Gladys, slowly, "that I almost wished the lady had said something about testimonials."

"Lor, why?"

"It would have looked better for her own respectability! But I believe that I am very unreasonable, since, certainly, if she had required them I could not have furnished them. I wonder who she is?"

"Lor', child, why of course she must be one of the Fairbridges of Fairbridge, in that neighbourhood."

"You know them?"

"I know of them. They are among the first families—Now what are you laughing at?" demanded Miss Polly, breaking off, half in dudgeon, as she met the quizzical smile of Gladdys.

"Not at you, Miss Polly, dear; I could not afford to do that. But at the F. F. V.'s. I am very glad, however, that you know this Mrs. Fairbridge, and can vouch for her respectability. Ah! who will vouch for mine? I think that I will answer this letter, and accept the situation," said Gladdys.

"If you are set to go out teaching, I don't know as you could do better than go there," said Miss Polly.

Gladdys answered the letter that same day, saying that she was willing to accept the terms, and was ready to enter upon her duties at any time.

On Tuesday she received an answer to that letter, thanking her for her promptitude, and saying that the carriage of the writer would be at Dranesville on the next Saturday afternoon, at three o'clock, to meet Mrs. Powis, and convey her to Fairbridge.

"There! you see, it is one of the Fairbridge's, of Fairbridge!" said Miss Polly, exultingly.

Gladdys wrote one more letter, saying that she would be punctual to the appointed hour.

And she spent the remainder of the week in making preparations for her departure.

She still haunted the post-office every day. But no other answer came to her governess's advertisement; and none at all came with any news of Arthur Powis.

"You will go to the post-office and inquire, Miss Polly. And if any letters should come, you will put them in these envelopes and send them, will you not?" asked Gladdys putting into the old lady's hands half a dozen envelopes, already directed and stamped.

"Oh, yes, I will do anything in the world you want me to," said Miss Polly.

Gladdys had been fortunate in finding a place at service for Ennis, who was to enter upon her duties next morning.

So, when Saturday came, Gladdys had nothing to do but to take leave of her loving friends.

She would gladly have forced upon their acceptance some presents, from her slender stock of clothes; but they would upon no account receive them.

They blessed Gladdys, and wept over her, as she embraced them each in turn, and soon after took her seat in the conveyance that was about to start for Dranesville.

There were two or three farmers and their wives who occupied the inside with her; but these were only intermediate passengers, and were set down at various points on the road.

So that when the conveyance rolled into the village of Dranesville, Gladdys was its sole occupant.

It stopped at the village inn, and Gladdys looked around, but saw no carriage waiting.

There were plenty of hostlers and idlers, however. And Gladdys blushed deeply, and drew her veil over her face, as she made her way through these, and entered the inn.

A civil servant-woman showed her at once into the parlour, and asked her if she would please to have a room, and if she would please have tea?

"No," Gladdys said, "I am only waiting for a lady whom I expect every moment to meet me."

The civil servant went away.

Gladdys glanced at the clock.

It was not yet three, so there was nothing to complain of.

But Gladdys had had no dinner, and she would have been very glad indeed to have had some tea; but ah! she had no money to pay for it!

She, the undisputed heiress of millions! She had spent her last shilling to pay her fare to Dranesville.

But the kind old ladies had not left her utterly unprovided.

So she opened her little travelling bag, and took from it some bread and butter and cold chicken, and made a tolerable luncheon, with the help of a glass of water from the sideboard that stood in the room.

She had scarcely put aside the débris of her meal when the servant-woman appeared, inquiring:

"Are you Mrs. Powis, ma'am?"

"Yes!" replied Gladdys.

Then there's a lady in a carriage outside, has come to meet you."

"Quite right," said Gladdys, rising.

"And if you please, m'm, she says, will you excuse her from lighting, as she is in a great hurry to get home; and will you come out to the carriage at once, if you are ready?"

"Certainly," said Gladdys, rising to follow her conductor.

A handsome, dark-green close carriage, drawn by two fine looking grey horses, stood before the house.

The landlord himself held the door open, and let down the steps as the young lady approached. With a deep bow, he handed Gladdys into the carriage, put up the steps, and closed the door. And the carriage started—started so suddenly as to throw Gladdys forward into the arms of a dark-veiled lady, who was seated opposite, and who quietly put her back in her proper seat.

"I beg your pardon, madam," said Gladdys, in some confusion, as she adjusted her disordered dress; "it was the suddenness of the start! Have the horses run away? They are going at a tremendous rate."

No answer from the veiled lady.

Gladdys suddenly looked across at her. Swift and fatal as the thunderbolt fell a terrible fear on Gladdys! Acting on it—in desperation, she darted at the woman and snatched the veil from her bonnet, revealing—the face of Mrs. Llewellyn!

The screams of Gladdys rent the air, as she dashed her hand through the glass side windows of the carriage, in the mad hope of escape. But the carriage doors were locked fast; besides, they were in a narrow country road, in a thick wood some distance from the village, and still driving at a tremendous pace.

A low, mocking laugh met her ears. And the next moment a strong woman's arms were thrown around her shoulders, and she was forced back into her seat, and a handkerchief saturated with chloroform was held over her mouth and nose.

Gladdys struggled desperately; but all in vain. She tried hard to avoid breathing the deadly aroma; but its subtle fumes penetrated to her brain.

It is said that the eye of the cat who has a poor little mouse in her claws, grows and dilates into a vast, horrible, green firmament, filling all the vision of the victim—all that it sees in life—the last that it sees in death. I know not if this be so.

But the last thing that poor Gladdys was conscious of, as her senses reeled away from her, to the music of a thousand bells, was—the dreadful eyes of her mortal foe, glaring down upon her with diabolical malignity and triumph.

(To be continued.)

THE STORY OF A PORTRAIT.

"It is only an every-day face."

"Every-day faces have histories."

The two young girls stood before the large portrait which they had just drawn out from amidst the rubbish and confusion of an unused chamber.

It was a dull, grey afternoon, and they had wandered over the large old house, to which they had come for a fortnight's visit, seeking to while away the lonesome hours.

It was a fair face which looked upon them from the canvas—a face still in the flush of youth; but an expression of sadness lingered in the clear eyes, and lurked around the red lips.

"How I should like to know something about her!" said Fanny, the eldest. "I wonder if aunt Burgess could tell me?"

"No," said Jane—"the woman has been dead a hundred years I don't doubt; the picture wouldn't have been thrown away here, with the rubbish, if she had any friends living to care for it."

"What is that, Jane?"

The door had opened unheard in their conversation, and an elderly lady stood looking in on the threshold.

"Oh, Mrs. Burgess, we were looking at this picture. Fanny is curious to know its history. I told her, most likely, the original had been dead and buried a hundred years."

"Not so long, my dear," said Mrs. Burgess, shaking her head, a little sadly. "Don't you see her dress is modern? I knew her myself in my young days; I used to visit her; but she was Rachel Richards, then a poor girl, and not Mrs. Rachel Vincent, as she afterwards became."

"Oh, I am sure there is a story about it," said Fanny, eagerly; "do, please, tell us, Mrs. Burgess!"

"It is hardly a cheerful one, my dear, but open the window, the air is close, these rooms have been shut up so long, and I will try to relate it."

Jane flung open the window, letting in a shower of rain drops which had gathered on the sash, and a current of sweet June air, laden with scents of apple-blossoms and lilacs.

Mrs. Burgess sat down on the old settee, which, with a heap of lumbering furniture, had been removed to these distant rooms, the girls grouped beside her, and she began:

"Mr. Vincent, who owned this house and these lands, stretching far as you see on every side, was my uncle—my uncle by courtesy—he was my aunt's husband.

"When I first saw Rachel Richards, who smiles so sorrowfully upon us from that portrait—she was a young lady of twenty, ten whole years my senior.

"She had neither father nor mother, was a poor orphan, and had been brought up by my aunt out of charity, having very nearly a servant's place in the family.

"My aunt was proud; a very imperious woman; I don't think Rachel's lot was a particularly happy one. I think as she grew up she must have had a great many reprimands and heart-burnings.

"She was very pretty; this picture here does not do her justice, though it would have been hard to catch the light and play of those fine features; it might have been happier for her in the end, if she hadn't been so handsome; it looks so, but I can't say.

"My uncle and aunt had only one child, a son; how very, very fond they were of him! They made an idol of him, which we shouldn't do of human beings. Of course he disappointed them. He was three years older than Rachel, and brought up with her.

"We never should have conceived what came to pass—that he should have taken a fancy for her. Apart from her position as servant—a sort of seamstress—young people brought up together have generally a brotherly and sisterly sort of liking. It wasn't so in this case, however, on the one side at least.

"Arthur went away to finish his education, and was gone two years. The last year was spent in travelling with his tutor. He came back a very accomplished gentleman, and his fond parents doated upon him more than ever. His coming home fell just in the beginning of my visit; I was here with an elder sister; my aunt had begged of my mother permission for us to come and stay through the whole summer.

"After his greeting from his parents was over, he went out into the servants' hall. Rachel was there; she was too proud to come with the rest to greet him. I was there, too, having just ran out. I saw her draw back, and her face flush, as, after speaking to the others, he came towards her; poor thing, she felt her position, she was very proud; it must have been intuitive in her, brought up as she had been.

"Why, Rachel, how you have changed," he said, holding her hand, "I shouldn't have known you anywhere;" and his eyes spoke a very warm admiration, tempered with respect.

"I noticed it, child as I was, and wondered why the colour went out of her face, and her look fell.

"You can guess what came next. Arthur was a very honourable young man; he had no thought of deceiving her; he came very soon to the point. He must have loved her very dearly to bring such a grief to his parents. I think they had rather he would have died—his mother, at least—tenderly as they loved him. But the discovery did not come for a long time. Rachel had another lover. I believe in her heart she loved him best, but he was poor. He was a poor clerk at the chief shop in the village—the village was much larger then than it is now; you don't know how the place has dwindled away since those days—and his mother was a poor widow, entirely dependant upon him for support. If she had engaged herself to Robert Leavitt it might have been a weary waiting; to have married him at once would have been to step into poverty."

"But, Mrs. Burgess," interposed Fanny, "why should you suppose she had a preference for Mr. Leavitt? Mr. Vincent was more accomplished and agreeable, wasn't he?"

"I will tell you, my dear, something that I saw, a meeting between them. It was a June twilight, and I had wandered out alone in the garden. I heard voices, and came nearly upon Rachel and Mr. Leavitt close by the arbour. They were talking together; I ought to have run away; I feel ashamed to recall it; I don't know why I didn't. He was reproaching her with her changed ways toward him, and she at first made him no answer. Then he talked of Vincent, and made quick-sighted by his passion, seemed to catch at the whole truth. Rachel tried to deny it; she said Mr. Vincent was far above her, and hadn't any thoughts of her, but her voice seemed suddenly to stop. 'You'll be sorry when it's too late, Rachel,' said Mr. Leavitt, bitterly. 'You are throwing from you a true heart; you'll one day know the worth of Vincent never will marry you, you may depend upon that; he's only flirting with you, or something worse.' 'How dare you talk to me in this way?' she retorted. 'I've borne with you long enough to-night. Don't come near me again till you can talk to me with proper respect.' She broke away from him, and I, to avoid being seen, darted into a by-path in the shrubberies. I didn't tell my sister when I went in; I wanted to do so; but somehow something withheld me; I knew I had done wrong to listen."

She paused.

"I don't know," said Fanny, wisely pursing up her

lips, and shaking her head. "I shouldn't have married Mr. Vincent, I know, if I liked the other one best."

"Ah, my dear, thank God that you never had the trial; you or I don't know what it was; she knew poverty and dependence, because she had always been so poor, and had no lack of either; but she did not know what the enjoyments of riches were, because she had never had them."

"She made up her mind very soon; she was married privately to Vincent. It all came out just before my visit closed."

"I never shall forget that morning."

"Rachel, I, and my sister were in the dining-room; Rachel was sewing."

"I see now distinctly the white and red roses which crowded the vases on the mantel; how fresh they were. Rachel had gathered them; it was one of the allotments of her morning work."

"I said Rachel was sewing; my sister had a book; I was lounging about on the sofa."

"Suddenly my aunt came in, flushed and angry; she walked up to Rachel, and shook her violently by the shoulder. The girl dropped her work, and looked up into her face, with a start."

"Come, hussy," she said, or hissed, for the words seemed to come from between her teeth, "out of this house you go—not another hour—"

"Stop, madam!"

"My cousin's figure moved suddenly from behind a screen at the other end of the room, where it seems he had been writing at a table unobserved by us all, and his hand went hurriedly on the infuriated woman's arm."

"Mother, you are talking to my wife."

"Never shall I forget that moment; the white, sallow face that turned to his. She stood perfectly still, as if struck by a spell."

Then she threw out her arms, and the blood gurgled up to her mouth. Her son caught her just in time to break her fall on the floor.

A scene of wild confusion followed. My sister fainted away.

I think she loved Vincent; I was too young to suspect it at the time. I thought so afterwards, and I believe now it was my aunt's plan to bring them together; but Vincent was of another mind.

Rachel was very composed. Her calmness was astonishing, after the first shock. I think she was glad a discovery had taken place.

"She knew they would have to make the best of it, when their mortification had cooled down."

"I went away with my sister the very next morning, and did not see what followed."

Mrs. Burgess paused.

"I think Rachel was very ungrateful," said Fanny, "to marry Vincent so privately, when his mother brought her up. I don't see how his mother could overlook it."

"She never did. I think the mortification and anger hurried her into the grave. She survived his marriage only one year; his father was killed very shortly after by a fall from his horse; so Rachel was indeed Mrs. Vincent."

"How did she bear her new position? Did you visit her, Mrs. Burgess?"

"Not then; they came to see us; it was three years after the marriage, or near."

"Mrs. Vincent had just put off her mourning. We were living in C—— then."

"My parents gave them a cordial welcome, for Vincent's sake, but they had, of course, their prejudices toward his wife."

"She was very greatly changed—more beautiful than ever, with all the new aids of dress, and very gay. Oh, she was as unlike the still, silent Rachel Richards as possible!"

"I do not think Vincent had found the happiness he expected in his marriage. I have wondered if he had not discovered already his wife's indifference to him."

"My sister, poor girl, could not repress an emotion of envy. I began to see it, then. I think Vincent saw it, too, and that he had already begun to repent his hasty match."

"Still, as I have said, Rachel was beautiful and very charming. She had acquired a great many accomplishments since her marriage; her husband had spared no cost in her teaching, and her manners somehow reminded one of what we read of the ease and grace of courts. I don't know how she came by them. They were with us a week, and then went on in a short tour they were making."

"They urged us to visit them the following autumn, but my sister declined. It was fully three years before I saw them again. I went to them on a visit with my aunt. She, too, had married into the Vincent family, but was then a widow."

"Rachel was now a matured woman. It was about that time this portrait was taken; you see how sorrowful it looks."

"I think her life had not proved all she expected; she had begun to tire of its hollowness and splendour."

"She was too gay and charming to be natural. I began to think, young as I was, that much of her gaiety lay upon the surface. Perhaps an incident which took place one day helped me to this discovery. We rode out in the green, country lanes, and stopped our horses before a cottage to get a drink of water."

"It was one of the loveliest landscapes I ever looked upon—hills, vales, and groves, and a silver river threading close by between green banks."

"The farmer's wife—or such I thought her—came out with a glass and pitcher of sparkling water in her hands. We quenched our thirst."

"Mrs. Vincent, whose eyes had been fixed intently on the little child toddling at her feet, bent forward suddenly as she turned away to make some remark on the beauty of the scenery, and closed by asking the stranger's name."

"Leavitt, ma'am," said the woman, looking rather surprised at the question, "Leavitt."

"I turned, struck by a new curiosity, to glance at the woman as she disappeared. I saw a fair, graceful figure, a countenance less strikingly beautiful than Rachel's, but fine and winning in its expression. This, then, I knew at once, was Robert Leavitt's wife, Rachel's old lover. He had reconciled himself to his disappointment. I stole a look at her. I saw her hand tremble as it held a cluster of water lilies on her lap, and her face growing white under her veil. No one else noticed her emotion. There were two other ladies with us, and soon she was chatting away gaily as usual; but we never came that way to drive again."

"I think Rachel and her husband did not live very happily together. He had something of his mother's imperious temper, and I think, as I have said before, that he began early to doubt the wisdom of his choice."

"The next few years were very important ones in our home. My sister married, my father died, and our little household was completely broken up. I heard about that time very suddenly of a separation between Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, and that the former had sued for a divorce. Of course everybody took the gentleman's side. He had friends and means—

"The wife had not a relative in the world. He got his case, how I do not know, but I suppose by some quibble of the law. I cannot think Rachel was criminal. She did not go away from here; if she had done so, people would have said she was with her alleged lover, Captain Lessington; but, on the contrary, she hired a room in the village, and took in sewing to support herself. She had a brave heart. Most women would have shrank from such a course, but she chose to live scandal down, and took the only way she could to uphold her innocence. She had been generous in her days of prosperity; no one laid a word or act of pride against her, and so there were very few to rejoice in her downfall. She had taken her old name of Rachel Richards again. I wonder if she did not wish she could go back to those dear old days, happier with all their petty mortifications and griefs than the gloomy years of wealth and honour."

"Mr. Vincent was not happy. He had won his case, but how could he be? I think there was a lingering tenderness in his heart toward his wife, after all. He could not convince himself of her sin, and, though she had erred, he must have known that he, too, was in fault. They met sometimes in the village streets, the pale seamstress on foot, the rich country gentleman in his carriage."

"These were bitter meetings, but I think the husband bore the keenest pain. You look surprised. I know Rachel was poor, and poverty and labour are no light things when one has no object but the common bread they must eat to strive for; still, you forget that, even in the beginning, the chains of her married life were woven out of a very different material from wreaths of roses, and that, when harsh words came, as no doubt they soon did, the bondage might well grow intolerable."

"As for Vincent, he had what his wife had not—recollections of family honour, and the consciousness, too, that he had acted hastily, both in his marriage itself, and in its late repudiation."

"What became of her?" asked Fanny. "Did they come together again?"

"No; a stranger thing came about. After more than twelve years of this life, when Rachel's dark locks were thickly woven with silver, and the bloom of youth had quite passed away, Leavitt, then a widower, came and renewed his suit to her."

"Why, Mrs. Burgess, how could he?"

"It was very natural, my dear, though such romantic events seldom come round. Mr. Vincent was dead, and Mr. Leavitt, knowing her as well as he once did, never could have believed the aspersions on her character. Her life, too, by that time, had lived them down."

"But she had refused to marry Mr. Leavitt."

"Yes, and no doubt he had felt that keenly enough,

but his own marriage had followed afterwards, and he had had ample time to lose the freshness of his mortification and anger. She had suffered enough for her error, he knew that."

"How wonderful it was they should come together at last. I don't think she deserved so much happiness."

"God knows best, my dear. She had some excuses for her faults. She never had any mother, poor thing, not to remember—and as I have told you, her lot with my aunt could not have been a very happy one. If Mr. Vincent had been more patient, more tolerant with her faults, though she could never have loved him, she might have made better wife."

"Did you see her after her second marriage, Mrs. Burgess?"

"Yes, once; that was not long after my brother-in-law had purchased this property, and just after my husband's death."

"My health was broken, and my sister-in-law persuaded me to come here, to try the benefit of the fresh country air."

"We drove out often together, and once we came upon those fresh green lanes where the incident I have described took place."

"That," said my sister-in-law, as I looked out at the cottage, "is the residence of Mr. Leavitt. Quite a romantic history is connected with his second marriage—oh, I forgot!"

"She stopped, in confusion.

"The late Mr. Vincent was your cousin!"

"But how," said I, wondering, "did Mr. Leavitt purchase this farm? I understand he was a poor clerk. I supposed he remained in that position always?"

"No; his uncle died about the time of his first marriage, and left him this place. He was a hard, avaricious man, I believe, and had never taken any notice of his relatives in his lifetime."

"If Rachel had only waited, I thought."

"I felt curious to see her; but did not know how to gratify my interest. An odd chance helped me. I chose this direction for our drives often. This was not singular, for, as I have told you, the landscapes about there were very beautiful. One day an accident happened to our carriage in this very spot—one of the wheels gave way; the nut or fastening, I think, had got loosened, and we were compelled to alight."

"Fortunately, we were at the moment walking our horses, and they did not take fright. A light spring shower was beginning to fall, and our condition was not very agreeable."

"Mrs. Leavitt came out of her cottage, and with graceful hospitality invited me to enter. She did not seem to remember me; perhaps time and sorrow had changed my face, or, most likely, she did not desire to renew our old acquaintance."

"It was a homely farmhouse, but I could not but notice the exquisite order and symmetry which pervaded its humble appointments. A vase of white and red roses on the table, evidently fresh culled from the little garden beneath the windows, brought up that strange morning of the discovery of her first marriage with startling distinctness."

"I looked at her as she sat entertaining her guests, with very much of her old ease. Her dark hair, now thickly threaded with grey, was parted smoothly back, and her eyes wore a look of serene content, such as I had never seen in them in the old days. A slight, pretty girl, evidently a step-daughter, came in; her face, too, wore a cheerful look."

"Very plainly Rachel's declining years were better, much truer, happier, than any other part of her life had been. I looked back at her when we had parted from her, and saw her standing in the door where she had received our thankful adieu."

"Could her portrait have been taken at that moment, to stand side by side with this, you would see the fruit of the lesson she was only learning when the painter made it."

"And she never had any regrets for her old fortunes?" said Jane. "Well, I am glad she was happy at last. Now I come to look clearer at this painting; I think it is not an every-day face; the eyes have a world of thought. Poor Rachel! how much she must have suffered! but how fortunate to be able to retrieve her mistake at last."

"Yes," said Mrs. Burgess, "it was a good fortune, which falls to very few in this world. We generally have to bear the penalties of so great a mistake as this through the rest of our lives."

The sun broke suddenly from the clouds still dripping with rain, and shone into the chamber, flinging a mournful glory around the portrait.

The dark eyes seemed to kindle, the sorrowful lips to curve into a smile under its rays. The little group gazed upon it with a deepened interest, the same thought stirring silently in the hearts of each—"Every human life has a history."



[AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.]

NOT A MARRYING MAN.

CHAPTER I

There's disappointment again.

"DEAR ANNE:—Your letter directed to Lucille came to hand. I was somewhat surprised at its being sent, as my niece is not here and I had no intimation that she was coming. What shall I do with it? Perhaps it was forwarded here by mistake. Very truly yours,
"SISTER LETTY."

"MY DEAR HORACE:—I am filled with alarm and terrible forebodings. Lucille went from here with the avowed intention of visiting her aunt Lettie of Kingstonwood. She took her ticket for that place, and talked of it constantly. You know she had a thousand pounds, left by her uncle Dreesly. The money was in bills which she took to deposit in Kingstonwood Bank, there being none nearer. Oh! Horace, I am in mortal fear that my child is lost—killed perhaps for the sake of her money—what shall I do? I am too ill to take steps to discover where she is, and I know that it will seriously interfere with your plans to come over here, but I have no one else to advise me. I am almost disheartened. Could—Oh! no—no—my child never would deceive me; but she has not been like herself for months. Pity an unhappy mother, whose only earthly consolation is the child she has loved so well."

"ANNE LISCOMB."

This letter reached Horace Lawsten at his lodgings, at six o'clock on a quiet August day. As he read, pushing back papers and letters on the small mahogany table, his face grew pale and his resolute mouth

trembled. He sprang up from his seat, upsetting it with a great racket—took a few hasty steps back and forth, then thrusting his hand in his pocket, he drew out his wallet and seemed counting its contents.

"Two pounds will take me there," he muttered, looking back with a perplexed air on the books and papers—and then began packing his portmanteau. He paid not much regard to the shining collars and carefully glazed shirt bosoms, but thrust them in anyhow. Then putting on his hat, and throwing on a light neat overcoat, he went down-stairs to summon his ladyship.

"Mrs. Waters," he said, as a little fat woman, with cap frill standing out, made her appearance, in dough-streaked dress, and arms and hands covered with flour, I have an unexpected call to Renleigh. I may be gone a week. Please keep my room locked, for I have left my papers scattered about"—and he was off.

"Well, mercy!" ejaculated Mrs. Waters, watching his receding figure, "if that ain't a queer move—and he telling me yesterday that he hadn't one minute to spare for the festival.—"No, not one minute, Miss Waters," says he, "for I've a limited time to get through my examination" or whatever he called it, and now he's off, after that letter comes like a shot from a gun—well, I never. He's a fine, handsome young man, and there ain't his like in this place—so very noble-looking, and so steady. I wish my Jenny could get such a one. And now I think of it" she continued, "his gal lives in Renleigh, so Miss Somers told me, and she dressed there for years—a real live beauty—and that's what's the matter. Maybe she's sick, and she may die, and then I wish my Jenny might get him, that's all."

So saying, she turned into

her cheerful little kitchen and retailed the news to Jenny, who sat with her hair in papers, looking over the fashion plates of a new magazine.

Meantime, Horace had hurried to the first stable and hired a horse to carry him two miles to the station, and he was soon speeding to Renleigh, where he arrived at half past eight in the evening.

Oh, what a false show the world makes!

The first place he sought, although he had tasted no supper, was the Widow Liscomb's cottage. It was bright moonlight, and the walk had never been so lonely, though the road led by many a tasteful country residence. The house was small, one story, but as pretty a piece of architecture as one could imagine on so limited a scale. The bay window was closed—no beautiful face among its vine and lace-work, made his heart beat now. The sole ornaments, in his eyes, were gone—lost to him perhaps, for ever. Upon that subject he dared not trust himself think, but springing up the little box-bordered path, he seized the bell, and the loud peal resounded through the house.

A white face and wasted form answered his summons.

"Oh! Horace, how kind of you! I shall never forget it" she cried, extending her hands. "Come in—oh! I am sadly out of spirits; I can hardly command myself for a moment. What does it mean, Horace? where do you suppose our precious girl is? I am wearied with conjecturing. I am dying by inches. Oh! Lucile, Lucile."

"Don't allow yourself to be overcome in this way, dear madam," said Horace, throwing his portmanteau aside, and himself into a chair, "but tell me everything as lucidly as possible. When did Lucile go?"

"Wednesday morning—six days ago; and Saturday I wrote, thinking as she went to stay only seven or eight days, she might extend the time to a fortnight. It has been rather lonesome for her here, and she is usually so gay. She was in very poor spirits some time before she left, and I had fears for her health. And when she went away she was not quite as happy as I should have expected, and—God forgive me!—I almost felt as if I was looking my last upon her. Oh! my child, my child! this anguish will kill me."

"You say she started for Kingstonwood."

"Yes. I saw the tickets myself, and remember how she looked when she stood there, the light full upon her face. Oh! I was too proud—too vain of my beautiful child, and now she is lost—lost to me for ever, for ever!"

"Oh, no; do not needlessly torment yourself," said Horace, though his own manly face worked with ill-concealed emotion. "I shall start to-night for Kingstonwood, and find out what I can early in the morning. There's a train at 9:10, and if you will let me have a mouthful—for I have had no tea—it will give me strength."

"Certainly; I wonder I didn't think of it," and calling the little servant, the widow ordered her to prepare something for the traveller.

"Lucile hasn't seemed quite like herself lately," she said, with an appealing glance to the young man; "have you ever observed it?"

"It may have occurred to me," said Horace, gloomily.

"Her tastes are so different from mine," replied the widow; "she is like her father, poor child, who was never content with a quiet life; and I fear, I much fear, she never will be."

As for Horace, he was thinking of the last interview he had held with the beautiful, wayward girl; for she was as wayward as she was lovely, and Horace often bitterly questioned himself how he had come to worship her with such idolatrous love as he felt at this moment surging up in his breast for her. She had promised at that interview to become his wife, and yet, somehow the young man was not quite satisfied, either with her reluctant words or manner. They almost stung him now, for he recollects he had told her it would be long before he could win fame or station, both of which he would attain for her sake, if his life was spared.

After a frugal meal, Horace once more took up his portmanteau. It was nearly twelve when he reached Kingstonwood, but late as it was he searched the traveller's list, and found that on the previous Wednesday there were only two arrivals—a Mrs. Angela Stewart, and a Miss Lucy Lester. Something in the arrangement of the name struck him, and acting upon the surmise, he called one of the neat-looking chambermaids to him early in the evening and questioned her as to the two arrivals on Wednesday the sixth.

"One was an old lady," she said, thoughtfully, taxing her memory. "And, oh, yes, I remember the other, for we all said what a beauty she was, and how strange for her to be alone. She had soft, dark eyes and her hair waved on the sides of her cheeks, and her complexion was pure red and white."

"Did she have any baggage with her?" asked Horace.

"Only a trunk; and I think that was quite new, and came the day after she arrived. She only staid that day, sir, and at evening ordered a carriage, and drove away."

"You don't know where?"

"No, sir, only that she asked me how far it was to Hatten; and after that how far to Ryde. Ryde is a watering-place, and I imagined she must have gone there." The girl was very intelligent, and gave her answers in a subdued and correct manner. It is probable she formed her own conjectures about the handsome young man with the melancholy smile, who betrayed his interest too strongly not to betray himself.

Ryde was thirty miles away. Suddenly it occurred to him that Lucille had a correspondent in Ryde; she had mentioned it by the merest accident.

In connection with that thought, the girl as suddenly said:

"Oh, sir, I had quite forgotten. The young lady left a letter which seemed to have something done up in it; or rather it was half a letter, but enough, perhaps, to tell you if it is the one you are looking after."

Horace blushed; how did she know that he was looking after this young and beautiful girl? he blushed with a certain consciousness of shame, for from the first his heart had misgivings him that Lucille had long been acting under a mask.

While thus thinking unpleasantly enough, the girl had obtained the document, and he carried it to his room.

This was all he needed.

Torn and soiled though it was, Lucille's name was there; and the recklessness, if not degraded character of the writer, left no hope of the future prospects of one he had so proudly thought of as his promised wife.

"Don't be so squeamish, Lucille," the letter went on to say; "your mother need not know anything about it. Besides, if you don't come soon, that splendid fellow whom I told you will be gone, and there's a chance lost. I tell you, there is no knowing how rich he is; he throws money about him like dross, and he will not pay any attention to the hackneyed bairns of society. Your sweet face, fresh from the country, will please him; and I have talked so much about you that he is almost in love with you."

"Bob, come with me—I often travel that way—a brother's protection enough, even if he is fat, and my staid ladyship can chaperon you, being six months, two weeks, and a day older than you are. As for your poor nervous mother, as long as she can coop up her spiritless daughter, no doubt she will continue to keep ill. I tell you, there is a brilliant prospect before you—you will be married here to Lonyville Craig—isn't it a sweet, odd name? and then you can break it to your mother, and have it all over; be a rich woman and drive your own carriage."

"At all events, come, if you want to see what gay life is for a week or two. It won't hurt you, and may do you good. We drive, and play, and sing. I'll teach you all the new dances, and you will be the admired of all admirers. Yours as of old,

"LOLLY POP."

CHAPTER II.

Lost—last! lost!

And this was his idol; his innocent, artless, generous, unselfish love.

How his face crimsoned at these lines! Could this be his Lucille? the incarnation of purity and womanly gentleness, lured by such language; led by such a mind as this letter revealed, coarse, unlovely, unmanly?

The knowledge of her deception almost broke his heart; and for that poor, fond, weak, invalid mother, every sympathy of his manly soul was roused. But for her he would have scattered the fragment in pieces, swallowed his regrets, torn the weak passion that had made him so proud from the innocent temple of his heart—and dashed the sparkling, beautiful portrait he now held in his hand to the earth and ground it to atoms.

But he had promised her that when he took the original, she should have that lovely picture—a triumph of art, a work of love—for his dearest friend, now in the grave, had painted it, and touched it with something more than an artist's interest; for, unknown to any one but himself, the wonderful beauty of Lucille had won all his impulsive heart, and though the seeds of disease had long been sown in his constitution, yet his hopeless love hastened his death.

And what a picture it was!

Horace flushed, and grew pale again and again with the revulsion of his feelings.

The downlike eyes seemed almost heavenly in their shy, soft beauty.

Once more he drank in the intoxication of that love-

lessness; then, with a deep and bitter sigh, folded it up, wrote upon the back "Ichabod," and placed it in one of the pockets of his portmanteau.

The close of the day saw him stepping from a small steamboat, and, in the deepening darkness, moving towards the nearest hotel.

There, on registering his name, he met again with that Lucy Lester.

She was there, under that roof.

His eyes grew dim and his knees trembled; he drew the wide brim of his hat lower over his eyes, and glanced round suspiciously upon two or three faded men of fashion, who smoked, and twirled their thick moustaches, and babble inane nonsense among themselves, about theatres, billiards, and champagne.

Arrived in his room, he began to plan. What course should he pursue? By a few words he had heard, he learned that there would be a grand ball in the great saloon, and he determined to be an unseen spectator.

His first proceeding, however, was to write and dispatch a letter to the widow, worded as cautiously as was advisable; his next, to throw himself on the hard bed to which he found himself doomed for that night at least. There was not much to be done with his toilet—a clean shirt, a little polish on his well-worn boots, an extra bruising of his test broadcloth, and he stood there as much a man as any of them. Poor foolish Lucille! to throw from her false this grand student—this man with lines on his face that told where thought and mind had held sway; this deep-eyed, broad-chested, vigorous, manly man, unscathed by vice even in thought; and whose nobility sat enthroned on a brow such as is not often vouchsafed to fallen human nature.

Some little time after the music commenced, Horace went down. It was strange, he thought, that he had to take hold of the bannisters to steady himself. Arrived at the lower landing, he mingled with a party of loafers—on who were commenting on the different beauties whirling round the brilliant room.

Horace felt stiff at this crowd, his purity was shocked at the soft-voiced oaths and the disgusting comments and sneers of men professedly gentlemen. He found his way out on the balcony, and stationed himself near a window that was not occupied. Here he could watch the flashing figures; here after a little time he saw—was it his Lucille?

Leaning languidly on the arm of a man whose face told of unabated dissipation, yet passed for handsome, with deep black beard, eyes and eyebrows as black as pale Greek outline of face and features—a broad but low forehead—there was Lucille—in a dress of the palest pink, of a lustre most brilliant—soft lace glistening over her bosom and arms, and some costly tiara blazing amid the folds of her dark hair, her cheeks crimsoned, her eyes shining, her teeth glistening, and the deep dimples rounding into smiles—oh! how he pressed his hand over his heart, while his set lips told what dangerous, perhaps murderous intent lurked in that hitherto gentle and generous soul.

"Lucille is lost!" he cried again and again, breathing heavily; "lost to me for ever—but I will save her to her mother! that man shall never chase the bloom from my poor, transplanted rose."

Lucille was waltzing. He watched for a moment, then he could look no more. A sickening revulsion of feeling passed over him; he could have cried out in the fierceness of his agony, but he turned silently from the window and strode up stairs to his chamber. There, unheeding whether he was heard or not, he passed the night in walking to and fro, and thinking such sad thoughts! it would have been little wonder if grey hairs had been found among his dark locks in the morning.

* * *

By bush and brake—by rock and hill—
Where'er I go, I see her still.

Lucille sat deep in thought at the window of her friend's room.

"Indeed," she was saying earnestly, "I must go home this week; I am all the time anxious about mother, and sorry I ever thought of this wild freak. What would poor mother say?"

"Pshaw!" cried a showy, black-eyed girl, who, in an opposite corner of the room, was busily sewing silver spangles on some lengths of ribbon; "what a fool you make of yourself by your squeamish notions. Thank fortune, I never have such; I just enjoy the present moment as if there never was to be another one. Besides, Lon. Craig will certainly propose soon; don't you see that he has certainly lost his heart?"

Lucille's cheeks were red with blushes. He had said some things to her that had made her heart beat partly with vanity, partly with indignation. She was no match, with her country ways of thinking, for that keen, polished, wary villain, who thought it "such sport to hoodwink a woman."

"He must propose quick, then, or come after me, for I shall go home this week. Mother may not have got my letter—may have written to aunt Letty, and

that—oh, it frightens me to think what might be the consequences!"

"Pshaw! what a timid thing you are! But see, who are those two? One of them seems to be excited."

Two gentlemen stood at some distance, just visible between the trees.

"One looks like Lon. Craig—I know the drop of his shoulders; but the other—I don't remember any such magnificent figure, do you? Elegant, isn't he? What massive breadth of chest, and how nobly he holds his head. Heaven! is he going to strike him."

The two women watched breathlessly. The taller and larger of the two had raised his arm, but suddenly he dropped it; and taking the other by the collar, who seemed quite helpless in his grasp, he lifted and threw him with considerable force against a tree. The other gathered himself up, roaring, and visibly very much frightened, making frantic motions and plunging in the direction of the muscular man, who was leisurely walking off.

"On second thought, that couldn't have been Lon," said the black-eyed girl, whom Lucille called Bell; "it must have been a couple of the servants. I have noticed some remarkably large men among them."

And thus she rattled on, though her cheek had grown quite pale, until a servant came to say that a gentleman wished to see Miss Lucy Lester, in private.

"There, it's coming!" cried Bell, with heightened colour. "Now go down and behave like a lady, and don't forget that I am to be bridesmaid."

Lucille arose, changing colour. Not the remotest suspicion that she had been followed troubled her mind.

Her mother was alone and sitting, Horace studying law in another town, and the ~~sun~~ ~~sun~~ had covered her retreat with consummate skill.

The bold, laid face of Louville Craig had almost obliterated the fancy she had fit for that maid, grave beauty of Horace Lawsten; and all in a flutter she descended, as she thought, to meet him.

The little sitting-room contrived for such occasions appeared empty as the door swung open, and she advanced almost noiselessly.

A tall figure, with his back towards her, stood at the window.

In a moment her courage forsook her, though she had not yet divined whence presence it was.

He turned; she grew pale as death, and staggered, rather than walked, to the sofa. He came towards her, scarcely less white than she, with the marks of pain and sleeplessness and heart-anguish around his eyes and all over his haggard face.

"Lucille," he said, gravely, and not without a tenderness, for he pitied her; and love, stronger than death, will not succumb at a first or a second bidding.

"Why—why did you come?" she managed to say at last.

"To—save you—to your mother, Lucille, whom I left almost dying of slow anguish," was the reply.

"To save you, and exercise, if but for the first and last time, the right of a betrothed husband,"—a spasm of pain contracted his features, but he set his lips hard together, and continued: "to save you from that miserable villain who would ruin you, or any other simple woman who falls into his power."

"Of whom are you speaking, Mr. Lawsten?" she asked, assuming dignity.

"Of the man with whom you waltzed last night, whose poisonous breath contaminated the moral atmosphere."

"Sir—Mr. Lawsten—I will not have my friend slandered."

"Your friend!" he reiterated, a contemptuous pity in his voice. "Great heaven! Lucille, have you no self respect? Can you look in that man's eye and remain so pure a thing as friend? Why, do you know?"—he arose to throw off his violent emotion, and drew a breath as if it were a long agony,—do you know what that woman is with whom you are associating? That he, that double-dyed fiend, pays her board in this hotel; and that there is no brother in the case at all? that you are coaxed here to cover her infamy? Do you know, for daring to speak with infamous words of you, the woman I once loved, God only knows how well, I came near killing him, just now?—aye, lifted him like a feather, and might have dashed his brains out, but for the interposition of an Almighty power! Great heaven! I know not yet that I shall be free from that man's blood!" and he glared with alut teeth, shining, eyes, and face grey as ashes, at something Lucille saw not.

As for her, she sat motionless, almost livid, as this revelation was made to her, shuddering—cold.

Then rising wearily, she said, with a wild, yearning cry:

"Take me home—only take me home!"

"On the instant," was the reply. "Go now and get ready. The steamboat lies but a few steps off—and God grant we may not meet him."

Not long after, Lucille, pale, still, even white, so bloodless seemed her cheeks and her lips, was walking quietly towards the boat, a man following with her luggage.

"Stop one instant," said Lucille, as Horace, having seen her comfortably seated, was about to leave her. "Only tell me about my mother. Was she—her lips quivered, and the voice would not come.

"She was very ill," said Horace; "so very ill, that I expect this will be her death-blow," he added uneasily.

He was avenging his own wrongs now. "Let her suffer," he said to himself, bitterly.

She sank back without another word—feebly adjusted her veil over the colourless lips; and he left her, nor did he speak with her during the whole journey, though he treated her with consideration, chose the best places for her, saw that she was attended to, and finally bade her farewell at her mother's door, saying, as he handed her a small package:

"I promised this to your mother; give it to her, with my compliments," and he was gone.

Her brain reeled for a moment, as Lucille turned the door-knob; but conquering herself, she entered madly.

CHAPTER III.

Is there a light can point my 'wildered way?

Is there an arm of mercy stretched to save?

Mrs. LISCOMB met her on the threshold of their little sitting-room, gave a great cry of joy, and threw her arms about her.

"Oh, my darling, my darling, where have you been? I would not be sick, because I thought I should die before I saw you again."

Lucille had thrown off her veil.

"Why, my daughter, you are ill—you are faint! Come, Anne, bring me water! Oh, child, what has happened?"

And the terror in her voice was something awful.

"Don't be frightened, mother," said Lucille, in a low voice; "I am not going to faint. There, there—let me lay my head on your bosom. Oh, that is so good! How could I leave you!"

The voice was faint, hopeless—the face weary-looking, haggard, and robbed of its bloom.

Her mother felt life almost leaving her; but still she held her in her arms as if she had been an infant.

"There, mother, I won't weary you; I feel better now," said Lucille, after a few moments, rallying herself; "and I am going to tell you what a wicked girl I have been. But, indeed, indeed, my own mother, if you will forgive me, I'll never—never leave you again!"

And then, into almost horrified ears, she told the story of her escapade and its results.

"I'm sorry, mother, that you've lost a good and honourable son-in-law," she said, at the close, almost hysterically; "but perhaps you've gained something in the undivided love of a repentant child. Will you forgive me, mother?"

"My poor lamb!" was the only reply, and forgiveness was sealed by a tender embrace.

"Here, mother—here is something Horace put into my hand, when we parted, to give you. I think I can guess what it is."

"Your miniature, child," said her mother, tears dropping on it. "He was to give it to me on your marriage," she added, regretfully.

"Never mind, mother, that is not much," murmured Lucille, with a brave show of forced smiles; "you would have lost me in your declining years; now I can make you so comfortable, can love you so much!"

"Lucille," said her mother in an uneven voice, "did you love him, my child?"

"Mother, I think—I think I can say sincerely—that I did not—as I should love the man, that is, whom I should marry." This much, aloud—the anguish, "but now," was shut away in the depths of her heart.

For now indeed, for the first time, she realized what she had lost. From the moment he had left her on board the steamboat to herself, and she had watched his towering figure gradually recede, a wild, hopeless love had besieged her, conquering her wholly. But she felt that she had lost him, that never more she should be anything to him, that all affection for her had faded for ever from his heart; and she set herself vigorously to do her duty.

For some weeks, some months, in spite of herself, he looked to see him come, if only as a friend—but he never came. Winter passed, summer came, and the succeeding autumn saw her motherless.

Mrs. Liscomb had left little beside her blessings to her daughter. The sale of the little house only sufficed to pay the debts, and with only a few hundred pounds in her possession, she went for a while to the

house of her aunt Letty. She never wondered at the course Horace Lawsten had thought fit to pursue.

"How could he as a man who loved his honour, act differently?" she often asked herself. "Did I not deliberately deceive my mother—lie to him—can he respect me? and could love exist without respect? No, he did as any upright, honourable man would have done—but, thank God! he did love me once. O! how recklessly I have thrown my blessings from me!"

And in this way she always reasoned. She had lost none of her beauty, indeed she was but twenty now, and the sadness of her experience had only given a heightened charm to her sweet face.

Meantime Horace Lawsten lived only for fame, and he was reaping his reward largely.

Everywhere his name was beginning to be known as a rising young man. People spoke of him everywhere, and society threw her arms wide open and welcomed—success—as perhaps is only right, after all.

But I will not stop to argue. Suffice it that years added thoughtfulness, and thoughtfulness brought a certain beauty that most studious men are deficient in. He had admirers everywhere.

Lovely girls were proud to be noticed by him; any one of the aristocratic circle which he was now free to enter he might have chosen for his wife. Fame was bringing him prosperity—prosperity only brought him humility. He had not forgotten Lucille—not—but he had put her away from him, in the remotest niche of his memory, and drawn a thick curtain over the fair image. He thought he had stifled all his love.

Perhaps he had; but there were moments in which he sat motionless, pen in hand. If any one had asked him of what he was thinking, he would have started as if from a painful reverie, and answered—"Nothing."

CHAPTER IV.

Sweet tones, long silent, melt upon my ear.

MR. LAWSTEN was set down as a bachelor when successive "seasons" came and went, and he had as yet shown no preference for any of the fair throng he saw around him.

"Odd! peculiar!" were the epithets that were applied to him.

"How devoted he seemed to that little Lilly Damon!"

"Yes; but it was only for a while. Do you notice that he always affects young ladies of that complexion—pure red and white? We dark skins find no favour whatever."

"But I'm told he visits the Damons often. There are three daughters grown up, all charming."

"Yes; Mr. Damon makes a pot of him, always has—that's the reason. And I shouldn't wonder if he likes Lilly Damon; she's about as old as he is; they'd be well matched."

The Damons were indeed a lovely family—talented, educated and beautiful. For a year Horace Lawsten had visited them; and Lilly Damon in particular, though she had really no positive engagement, yet as girls will, sometimes took all the credit of the visits to herself. Still it was strange that as time went on Horace did not become a little more demonstrative; what did it mean?

"Clearly," said Mrs. Damon, who looked scarcely older than the eldest of her children, "clearly he's not a marrying man, my dears; make the most of him, for I prophesy that none of you will have him. So I'll not have any falling in love," she added with much severity, glancing over to Lilly, who certainly at that moment did not typify her name, for she was a red rose.

"You need not be afraid of me!" she said pettishly, her chin up in the air. Nevertheless she went away a half hour afterwards and cried about it. Love which is nursed in solitude, that has never had any encouragement, is not often very deep, however, so Lilly did not lose her appetite though she trembled a little whenever Horace came near her, and perhaps hoped in her heart that he might after all prove to be a marrying man.

The Damons had been gone all summer. Horace had remained at home and plodded on. He had an undying repugnance to watering-places, and would rather have staid in a graveyard for a week, than renew the torture of that little hotel bed-room, and certain reminiscences connected therewith.

As soon as the beautiful city mansion was in order, and the fluttering of feminine garments was heard throughout the house, Horace came there with his old fashioning regularity.

The girls had "everything" to tell, hinted that Matty had caught a bear, that Lilly had been a little star—quite followed and bowed down to—and above all, that they had found a new governess for Caddy, a child of seven.

"I shall always esteem her as the saviour of our

conversation turned upon her. "I should have liked her in any case, she is so unassuming, so humble, and yet so thoroughly a lady."

"She must have been so beautiful, too, mother," said Lilly.

"Well, my dear, to me she is still very beautiful," said Mrs. Damon.

Horace had not appeared to notice this conversation beyond a nod and a smile; in truth, his mind was elsewhere. They were all seated round the centre-table—he with the evening paper, the girls with their netting.

"You never heard of the fire in our hotel, I suppose," said Lilly.

"No, indeed; what was it?" he asked, rousing himself.

"It was soon extinguished. We had been obliged to put Caddy in a bedroom some distance from us. In truth, we knew nothing of the fire till the child came pounding at the door. There we saw a young girl holding her handkerchief to her face.

"'Mamma, she saved me,' cried Caddy; 'she ran right through the flames and took me out!'"

"You may be sure we were pretty thoroughly startled when we learned that what little Caddy said was true. The fire was all out; but on our inquiry early in the morning we found that this young girl, a governess, was so severely burned that it would probably be a disfigurement for life."

"She was indeed a heroine," exclaimed Horace; "an utter stranger to you, too."

"Yes, indeed, and just on the point of leaving, we learned, the family with whom she had engaged having lost all their property. I immediately made arrangements for her to come and teach Caddy, though we did intend to send her to boarding-school."

"And we all think that she has been in better circumstances," said Lilly, fumbling about her work-box, and then going to a small ivory casket.

"Is she disfigured?" asked Horace, going back to his paper.

"Not in my eyes," replied Mrs. Damon. "To be sure, the fine, beautiful skin is somewhat drawn and discoloured near the left temple; but when her hair is dressed low, I don't think any one would notice it, do you, Lilly?"

"I think I should, mamma; indeed, most people would;" she was still searching diligently for something. "Miss Dillingham said yesterday: 'Your governess would be almost a beauty if it wasn't for that scar.' Indeed," says I, "if you could hear mamma sometimes, you would say that scar was her chiefest beauty." Why, girls, where did I put that miniature?"

"In your pocket, Lilly," said her elder sister.

"So I did!"

And in went Lilly's little white hand, bringing forth a miniature case.

"There, Mr. Lawsten," she cried, placing it before him; "that's the lady as she was."

Horace slowly turned his eyes from the paper to the miniature; then started bolt upright, gazed at the picture with heaving chest and dilated nostril; then they all saw it. An almost mortal pallor spread over his countenance. He put both hands to his forehead in a tremulous, uncertain way, and sank back like one about to faint.

The family noticed this singular pantomime with a strange interest.

Lilly stood, with clasped hands, uncertain whether to fly to his relief; Mrs. Damon had already drawn some iced water from the silver cooler; the rest looked on speechless with amazement.

Very slowly the lawyer recovered himself—accepted the water, though his hand shook so that it was with difficulty he could convey the glass to his lips, replaced it on the table, and then arose, still unsteady in all his movements.

"You must excuse me, my friends; a little temporary trouble—it will pass in a moment. Allow me to bid you good evening."

And as if in an absent way, he took up the miniature and bowed himself out.

"I'll declare it was that miniature," Lilly protested, growing quite pale herself.

"And he has taken it," echoed her sister.

"There's some romance there," says Mrs. Damon, thoughtfully. "Of course it was the picture. I always said that man had a heart, though he took care not to let any one know it. Why, he very nearly fainted."

"Don't he look handsome, though?" queried Lilly, still preoccupied. "I declare, I don't know whether to be glad or sorry he saw it."

"Perhaps we shall all be glad," said Mrs. Damon, a smile breaking slowly over her face.

In the morning came Horace. He had quite regained his natural tone, and smiled, Lilly thought, more sweetly than ever.

He talked of everything for a while—books, the opera, the weather; then all of a sudden, as if his resolution was made, he turned to her, and said:

"Miss Lilly, I ought to ask pardon for taking that miniature with me, but the fact is, I once owned it, and—*and—is Miss—is your governess at home?*"

Lilly signified that she was.

"I should like to see her alone, just a moment," he said, and there was a singular tenderness in his voice.

Lilly went up-stairs; Lucille came down, never expecting to see a face that had been so dear. As once before, when she entered Horace was standing at the window, his back towards her. She knew that form, and would have retreated, but that her strength seemed to leave her.

Horace came forward, put his hands on her shoulders and gave one long, loving glance; then, as he drew her towards him, he cried passionately:

"Oh, my darling, my darling! I did not know till last night how terribly I had punished myself. Lucille, beloved still, no one else has ever held your place in my heart. Say you have not quite forgotten me."

She gently disengaged herself again, the blessed light of a new existence dawning on her soul.

"First look at me," she said, softly moving the brown hair back from the ugly scar.

"Only ten times more beautiful!" he cried, exultingly; for none but a pure spirit could so transfigure a face. Lucille, I am not worthy of you."

The governess, whose altered fortunes had stimulated her pride, so the world said, went out to earn her living under an assumed name, and her lover had lost sight of her for four years.

All that was the reason he was "not a marrying man;" but it was all right now, and they had a joyful wedding.

M. A. D.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "*The Jesuit*," "*The Prefate*," "*Missisgray*," &c.

CHAPTER CXXVIII.

The swallowing gulf.

Of dark oblivion and deep despair.

Shakespeare.

THE defenders of the prochida duly arranged, the half-caste turned to Ned—who had been eying his proceedings with a critical air, and giving an occasional nod of approval—and pointing to one of the angles of the court-yard, told him that his post would be there.

"Will it?" said the convict, sarcastically.

"What means you?"

"I'll tell you what I don't mean!" answered the ruffian, with a knowing wink. "I don't mean to run my neck within the compass of a halter! You forget that I am an Englishman: for you Spaniards and Mexicans, it's all very well to resist; but for me, to be taken would be death!"

"Coward!" exclaimed Mitility. "After drawing danger upon me, would you desert me in the hour of peril?"

Ned began coolly to whistle.

"But be it as you will!" continued the speaker, suppressing his resentment by a violent effort of self-command; "we are numerous, and brave enough to do without you!"

"Glad to hear it!" replied his guest, in a tone of philosophical indifference; "it's all your own fault, should it turn out otherwise. Remember," he added, "that I told you first thoughts were best! Had you taken my advice, this danger would not have befallen us!"

With these words, he directed his steps towards the house, fully determined to take no share in the defence—in fact, he felt that he had sufficiently compromised himself already. His first design was to possess himself of his grandson, and escape with him from the place; the woman he felt he might safely leave in the hands of the slave-dealer—who, if hardly pressed, could at any time retreat with the prisoners across the swamp.

In this last calculation—as in many others which this bold, bad man had made during his career of crime—he was doomed to be disappointed; for the landlord of the locanda—well aware that, after the part he had acted, his life depended on the destruction of Senator Mitility and his gang—led Dick, with a party of his men, to a clump of trees which commanded the narrow pathway through the treacherous swamp. A weasel could not have passed it but their guns must have reached it.

On the approach of the English, who were led on by the first lieutenant of the Revenge and Fred, the Mexicans, without waiting for a summons, fired a volley from behind the palisade; fortunately, in their impatience, without much effect—the distance was too great; two only of the storming party fell.

"Steady, men! reserve your fire!" exclaimed the officer, in that calm, quiet tone of command which inspires confidence. "First clear the inclosure, and then—"

The ready "ay, ay" announced that his men understood him.

The contest now raged in earnest. Volley after volley was fired on either side, and many of the besiegers and defenders alike bit the dust. Several times did the gallant seamen attempt to climb the palisades, but were as often driven back by the half-caste and his men, who fought with a courage worthy of a better cause.

"Curse them!" he muttered, as the assailants returned a third time to the charge: "they must succumb at last! My fellows begin to fail before the courage of these incarnate fiends!"

He was right: several of the Mexicans already began to call for the assistance of their comrades who were employed in guarding the slaves in the log hut. Mitility was reluctantly compelled to send an order for them instantly to join him in the courtyard and assist in the defence.

The consequence was, that the slaves were left alone.

When the doors were closed upon them, the quadroon girl, who had been attacked by cords to the female gall, called to the old negress who had supplied the poison for her knife.

The woman hesitated: old and decrepid, worn and suffering as she was, the wretched creature still clung to life. Perhaps, after all, it was not so much death she feared as the idea of being torn to pieces by the hounds: a fate which her father had frequently threatened her with, if ever she disobeyed his slightest order.

"Me dare not, missie!" she exclaimed: "me pity you very much, but me dare not. Massa kill me!"

A loud volley was heard, and the decrepid slave trembled in every limb.

"They will burn the prochida, Marilla!" exclaimed her former mistress; "and you with it; for Mitility will never encounter his flight with a helpless being like yourself! Cut the cord!" she added. "I know the means by which we can quit the place! I have gold and jewels which my tyrant knows not of! A moment—one moment," she continued, frantically, "and it may be too late!"

The negress approached, and looked her for an instant with intense earnestness in the face.

"Missie take me with her?" she said.

"Yes; I promise, by my soul—by my boy's safety—not to quit the place without you!"

"I trust you, Missie Alma!" answered the aged crone, drawing forth a clasp-knife, and at one stroke severing the strong cord which bound the hands of the quadroon—who no sooner found herself at liberty than the calm she had hitherto preserved gave place to the most intense excitement.

"Free!" she cried, tossing her arms wildly in the air; "the slave is free! Never again shall bonds confine these limbs! Free!" she repeated, "to save her child, or sleep in the same grave beside him! Give me your knife!"

This was addressed to the negress, who, terrified by her actions, and still more by her words, hesitated.

"What would you do with it?" she demanded, in accents of terror.

Without waiting for a reply, the excited girl hastily snatched it from her trembling hands, and began cutting the cords which confined the slave.

"What you do, missie?" roared the decrepid creature. "Let niggers go? Gorramighty! Mass, he swear, and gib her to the dogs, as well as old Marilla!"

In an inconceivably brief space of time the cords were all cut, and the slaves—amounting to nearly two hundred—were free, the liberated wretches—who, from the firing and cries in the courtyard had some idea of what was going on, yelled and danced with delight.

"Your bonds are broken!" exclaimed Alma, throwing open the doors of the log-house; "prove yourselves worthy of the blessing! Assist the generous men who are risking their lives for you. Down with the oppressors!"

With fierce cries, the liberated negroes rushed into the courtyard upon the astonished Mexicans—who for the third time had succeeded in repelling the advance of the besiegers. The sight paralyzed them, and the sailors, taking advantage of their confusion, came clustering over the palisades, with a hearty English cheer.

The first who cleared the long-defended barrier speedily succeeded in opening the gates for their companions. The entire party rushed in before the defenders of the place could recover from their surprise.

"Treachery!" shouted the half-caste, as he retreated, with about a dozen of his followers, toward the house, the doors and windows of which they rapidly barred; "some infernal fiend has released the negroes!"

A loud, mocking laugh rang in his ears: he knew the voice—it was that of the quadroon girl, whom he had so heartlessly betrayed and doomed to slavery.

He turned—but Alma had disappeared; she had reached the building before him.

During the attack, Lady Sinclair and Bell had barricaded themselves, with such pieces of furniture as their strength could move, in their chambers. As the contest continued, their excitement became fearful—hope and terror alternately struggling in their breasts. Margaret's fears were for her boy, who, pleased with the firing and the cries in the courtyard, would creep to the window.

A grasp was laid upon the handle of the door—which shook with the violent effort made to force it open—and the voice of Ned Cantor was heard alternately demanding admission, and threatening his daughter if she refused it.

"Be firm!" whispered Bell, to her companion, who, pale as a spectre, had sunk half-fainting upon the sofa, with Cuthbert clasped closely to her maternal breast.

The curses of the convict became yet more loud and fearful, and the frail barrier which the trembling inmates had erected began to yield.

"The negroes are at liberty!" shouted the ruffian: "I tell you that they have set the black devils free! Your only hope of safety is in following me—unless you prefer," he added, "such mercy as they will show you!"

Although no longer young, Ned was still a very powerful man. By a succession of desperate efforts he at last forced open the door, and made his way into the chamber. His eyes fell upon the child.

"Spare me!" exclaimed Lady Sinclair, sinking to her knees. If I have sinned towards you, my pride has been punished! By the love you once felt towards me, doom me not to misery."

"The boy!" said her father, sternly.

"Mercy—mercy!" shrieked the distracted mother.

"The boy!"

"Pity, for my dead mother's memory!" Headless of her frantic cries, and despite the desperate resistance both of Bell and his outraged child, Ned Cantor tore the screaming and now terrified Cuthbert from the arms of his distracted parent, who fell senseless upon the floor of the chamber. Without even a glance of pity towards the being he had once idolised, the heartless father rushed into the passage with his prize—where he encountered the half-caste.

"All is lost!" exclaimed Senhor Mitility, with desperate calmness; "they are battering down the door. Follow me," he added, "if you wish to avoid falling into the hands of your countrymen."

"Do you fly?" demanded the consul.

"What else is left me?"

"And alone?"

"Never, by heaven!" answered the villain: "the horses are at the entrance of the swamp! Walk but for an instant! She, at least, shall share my flight!"

He darted into the chamber, and speedily returned, bearing Bell Hazleton in his arms—who called with frantic screams upon her brother for aid.

By this time the defenders of the prochida, unable longer to resist their assailants, had crowded into the hall. In the midst of the confusion, the presence of Alma—who had entered with the rest of the fugitive—was unobserved.

The sight of the man who had so cruelly outraged her woman's heart—so wronged and scorned her flying with rival in his arms, inflamed her jealousy till it verged almost upon madness. The quadroon girl was armed, and knew well how to use the deadly weapon in her grasp: she dashed to his side, and, with a cry so wild and unearthly that it rose above the shrieks and tumult, plunged the long, keen blade into his side. He fell without a groan, and the dress of the now senseless Bell was deluged with his blood.

No sooner had Alma accomplished her purpose than the wretched woman sank upon the ground beside him, her eyes fixed upon the corse. Apathy—intense apathy—like that with which it is said the captive Indian braves the torments of death at the hands of some hostile tribe—seemed to have possessed her. She neither moved nor uttered a word, but remained indifferent to all around.

Unawed by the fate of his companion in crime, Ned Cantor succeeded in making his way to the spot where the horses were waiting. True, he had no longer a guide whom he could trust to lead him safely through the dangers of the swamp—but he determined to brave them. His blood was chafed—the evil passions of his nature were thoroughly roused. He had secured the only prize he valued—the person of his grandson—and vowed, with a fearful oath, that death alone should part them.

At the commencement of the attack upon the den of slavery, Dick and Frank, with a party of their men, as our readers may recollect, had stationed themselves at a point which commanded the only pathway through the swamp. When the consul appeared, dashing like a madman along the dangerous road, the sailors levelled their guns.

Frank Hazleton recollects the words of the dying Mabel—that Margaret could never be the wife of him who shed her father's blood. Darting between the men and the wretched fugitive, he called upon him to give up the boy—on which condition, for his sake, the friends who had assisted him would permit him to escape.

Ned's reply was in accordance with all the previous actions of his life. He raised himself in his stirrups, and levelling a pistol at the devoted friend of his outraged child, fired the charge point-blank into his manly breast, and, before the astonished seaman could recover from their surprise, gave the spur to his steed, and was speedily beyond their reach.

At the perpetration of this dastardly act, the Angel of Mercy veiled her sorrowing countenance beneath her radiant wings—in sign that she no longer dared to plead for him at the judgment-seat, but resigned him to his fate.

The measure of his crimes was full.

A second horseman now appeared dashing down the narrow causeway. It was the mulatto, Quacco—no longer the meek, submissive drudge, but the implacable avenger. As he rode along, he uttered fierce shouts, and whirled above his head the fearful lasso.

His former master saw his danger, and, knowing the relentless disposition of the man, redoubled his efforts to avoid him.

The chase at last became so exciting, that even Frank—whom Dick supported, mortally wounded, as he feared, in his arms—could not withdraw his eyes from the pursuer and the pursued.

"The boy!" he murmured, with a groan; "Margaret's boy! Lost—lost!"

"No!" exclaimed Dick Vernon, hastily; "see, the villain has dropped him on the sword, in the vain hope of saving himself!"

He was right. Ned, goaded by terror, and anxious to disencumber himself of the boy in the deadly struggle which he foresaw must ensue, checked his steed for an instant, and carefully deposited his grandson upon the soft, spongy turf through which the narrow causeway wound—then madly resumed his flight. Brief as was the space occupied by the action, it enabled the mulatto to lessen the distance between them.

One of the men started for the rescue of the boy. The two horsemen disappeared from the sight of the gazers—Quacco still in eager pursuit of his former master.

When Frank saw the child of Margaret in the arms of the sailor who had rescued him from his perilous position, the gallant head smiled.

"Let me restore him to her!" he murmured in the ear of Dick; "she must receive him from my hand—no hand but mine!"

"He has been dearly ransomed!" observed his young friend, sorrowfully; "at the price of such a life as yours!"

"Not so!" exclaimed the wounded man, with a flush of pride; "I have proved myself worthy of a place in her memory and love!"

With the death of the half-caste and the disappearance of the consul, all resistance ceased. The *phindia* was completely in the hands of the ship's crew, whose only task now was to restrain the fury of the liberated negroes, who began to inflict summary vengeance upon their former oppressors; a proceeding which, for the sake of humanity, was speedily put an end to.

By direction of Fred, Bell was carefully removed to her former apartment, where Lady Sinclair remained in a state bordering upon madness at the loss of her child—the solace of her long captivity and sorrow.

Vain were all the attempts made to recover the quadroon girl from the stupor which to all appearance had benumbed her every sense. She neither answered by sign nor word to the well-meant consolation addressed to her by those around—but sat with her eyes still fixed upon the body of her destroyer. He had fallen—fallen by her hand; but the wretched Alana remembered that he had been the lover of her youth—the father of her boy—and her woman's heart was broken.

Before the last strings cracked, the victim of Don Millitzay gave one token of consciousness—it was when the now fatherless Ferdinand was brought to her: she gazed upon him for a moment with a look of such despair and affection, that even the rough beings around her were moved—covered his innocent lips with passionate kisses—then, after placing him, with a glance more eloquent than any prayer could have been, in the arms of Fred, she dragged herself to the body of the half-caste, laid her head upon his breast, and died.

They were buried together—the slave girl and her destroyer; the cold sensualist and the true, fond heart which had expanded only in the sunshine of his smile, lived but in his love, and broke when he deserted her.

In Europe, happily, women are not slaves—unless

it be the slaves of their affections—which will too often forge the links by which man tyrannises over them.

Scripture says, "Thou shalt not seethe the kid in its mother's milk." Philosophy might add, "Thou shalt not bruise the heart through its affections."

Bell's severe sufferings—even her anxiety for her brother's safety—were repressed at the sight of Margaret's despair for her lost child. Liberty—long prayed for—had been vouchsafed by Providence at last. She was free—from return to the friends who loved her—to her husband—rank, wealth—all that the world can prize; but all were worthless without her boy. Her o'erwrought brain already tottered on the verge of reason, and madness must have ensued, had not the arrival of Dick changed her sorrow into joy so wild and frantic that it threatened to be fatal.

"Safe!" she repeated; "You are sure that he is safe? I may believe—yes, I may believe you! There is pity in your voice—sympathy in your glance! You would not deceive me!"

"He will be here in an instant!" replied the young man; "but his preserver—his generous defender—

"Frank!" interrupted Bell, catching him by the arm; "my noble, devoted brother! Wounded, dying, or dead?" She added, with a burst of tears; "dead!"

"Not dead!" replied Dick Vernon, eagerly—for the sight of her sorrow unmanned him; "hurt—very seriously, I am afraid; but not fatally—I trust to heaven," he repeated, in the warmth of his feelings "not fatally!"

Faithful to his resolution, Frank would resign Cuthbert only to his mother—whose happiness at recovering her lost treasures rendered her for a few minutes insensible to the danger of the man to whom she owed such weighty obligations.

"She has forgotten me!" murmured the wounded man in the ear of his sister—upon whose breast his sinking head reclined.

"Not so!" exclaimed Margaret, sinking on her knees beside the couch to which he had been supported, and raising his hand to his lips. "Forgive me if maternal love proved stronger even than gratitude! Noble, generous, devoted man! This heart must be cold indeed ere it ceases to acknowledge your devoted friendship!"

"Friendship!" repeated Frank Hazleton, with a faint smile. "Draw nearer to me—nearer!" he added, still grasping her hand; "I may tell you now—for death will soon set his seal upon my lips—and it is not in your nature to bear resentment to the dead!"

Lady Sinclair looked first at the speaker, then at his sister, with an expression of painful surprise.

"I loved you!" continued the young man—"loved you from the first moment I beheld you; but, conscious of my presumptuous folly, forebore to declare my passion—trusting that time might smooth my rugged nature, improve my mind, and render me worthy of the happiness to which my heart aspired! That thought was my dream—the companion alike of my sleeping and waking hours—it haunted me like my shadow, till you became the wife of Sir Cuthbert Sinclair; and then I struggled with my feelings—for it became my duty to forget you."

It was curious to observe the various emotions which alternately rose and disappeared in the countenance of Margaret—surprise, regret, pity, admiration, and, perhaps unconsciously, even to herself, a yet more tender feeling, as she listened to the simple story of the young man, who had displayed a devotion that might touch the heart of any woman.

"For me!" she sobbed, raising the hand of her preserver in gratitude to her lips; "for me you die!"

A smile, pure and joyous as that of a redeemed spirit winged for heaven, stole over the features of Frank Hazleton.

"Willingly!" he murmured; "death has lost its sting."

Dick saw that if the last chance of saving the life of his friend was not to be abandoned, it was time to end this painful scene. Gently, but firmly, he insisted upon all but Bell and Willie leaving the room. They remained to watch and pray beside the couch of the sufferer. A horseman was sent off to the shore, to forward the intelligence of the rescue of the ladies to Captain Vernon, and request the presence of Dr. Tyler. The shades of evening were gathering round the *phindia* when the skilful surgeon arrived.

It is now time that we return to the closing scene in the career of the wretched convict.

The forbearance of heaven is limited; for years the brand of Eternal Justice may remain suspended over the head of guilt, withheld from striking by a thread—a hair so fine that human intelligence is too weak to comprehend how it restrains the blow; one drop—one crowning act of villainy—perhaps is wanting to complete the measure of the wretch's crime; it is perpetrated, and the avenging glaive descends.

Through life Ned Cantor had been a bold as well as

reckless man; but from the moment he fired at the generous, noble-hearted Frank, his courage appeared to have deserted him—an almost childish terror took possession of his soul. He thought not of resistance—but flight. The teeth of the murderer chattered, and cold drops hung upon his brow, as his ear caught the clatter of horse's hoofs behind him.

Madly he urged his panting steed, whose flanks were covered with foam—sparing neither whip nor spur: still the pursuer gained upon him—each moment lessened the distance between them. Eagerly he sought for a weapon in his belt: the search was a vain one—he had fired his last shot at Frank Hazleton. The convict had resided too long in the country to be ignorant of the vindictive character of the mulatto race. He knew that he had offended beyond the hope of mercy—that his last chance was in flight; and that chanced lessened every minute—for his horse was failing him.

It was singular to observe the change which had taken place in the flat, inexpressive features of Quacco, as with loud cries of triumph, he drew nearer and nearer to his victim. Whirling the lasso round his head, his usually dull eyes flashed with the fire of hatred and excitement; the thick lips of the mulatto were drawn apart, displaying his close-set teeth.

"Ah, Massa Consul—um ride well!" he shouted; "but Quacco ride better! You no escape me! You sell Quacco—you make um slave! Um no sell—um kill you. Ha! ha! um kill you."

Next the speaker would assume a bantering strain.

"Quacco and massa ride race for life!" he said; "me beat you! whip and spur too much! Nigger win."

At last the pursuer had sufficiently lessened the distance between himself and his victim to use with effect his weapon. Rising in his saddle, he threw the lasso with unerring aim. It circled like a living snake round the arm and shoulder of the fugitive, and dragged him from his horse in an instant. The terrified animal, freed from the burden of its rider, forsook the beaten track, and soon began to flounder and sink in the treacherous swamp.

The mulatto suddenly checked his rein. He had secured his prey, and it was not his intention to end his sufferings too quickly.

"Ha, Massa Consul, me hab you now!"

Ned groaned. In the fall from his horse his limbs had been fearfully bruised, and his arm dislocated by the lasso.

"Pity him skin no black as his heart," continued his former domestic; "me sell you den—make money ob you! Bucca man catch black man—um sell him! Black man catch bucca man—why for him no sell um too?"

"Mercy!" cried the maimed and writhing wretch.

"Mercy! What dat? We neber hear ob him at Belize. You no talk mercy at prochida. You no show sport, massa!" continued his captor, at the same time giving the lasso a violent jerk, which inflicted exquisite torture upon his victim. "Consul and Quacco hab race together—only this time coloured man ride and white man run!"

"I am rich!" frantically exclaimed Ned Cantor, who knew that the "race," as the mulatto termed it, meant death.

"Me know dat."

"I will give you all—all that I possess."

"Me hab all that you possess!" replied the mulatto, fiercely; "your life—and dat me take. You sell me—and me kill you—kill you like stupid buffalo or black jaguar."

Quacco once more gave the spur to his steed, which started off. For some few paces the convict continued to keep his feet—but the speed at last became too great; he fell, and was dragged over the rough stones which formed the path through the swamp—the mulatto shouting and laughing at his cries.

"Ha—ha! you talk pity! No pity; Quacco black skin, but you black heart."

After a few minutes of intense suffering, the groans and shrieks suddenly ceased.

"What dat? you make no music now—no sing more."

The mulatto once more checked his steed, and turning round, regarded the body of his victim; a slight convulsive movement in the limbs alone gave signs of life. These, however, lasted but for an instant; there was a deep groan, and all was over.

"Me tink um really dead!" observed the avenger, coolly; "him fox—old fox. No catch Quacco."

Still holding the lasso round his arm, the speaker dismounted and approached the lifeless body, which he turned over with his foot. In dragging his victim over the swamp at the fearful rate he had done, the skull had been knocked against a stone and his brains dashed out.

"What thick skull!" exclaimed the mulatto, with a gesture of contempt; "like bucca man, um feel only in de head. Nock um very hard—it no kill um heart."

With this reflection—in which there was more truth and philosophy than the speaker imagined—he released the lasso from the arm of the convict, and rolled the body over into the morass.

How strange and capricious a thing is the human heart! Who can comprehend its secret workings or control its varied impulses? Not reason—it is too often its slave—or philosophy—for it is its toy. When the brain decides, its resolutions are as straws—one breath of feeling or of passion disperses them to the winds.

The heart is a mystery which the angel nearest to the Throne on High would fail to fathom: He who framed alone can read it.

Whilst Lady Sinclair believed that the days—nay, the very hours—of her preserver were numbered, she suffered him to pour forth the long-repressed feelings which consumed him—listened, if not with sympathy, with patience, to the story of his love—its struggles, trials, hopes, and despair; her woman's heart was touched by a devotion of which approaching death appeared the seal.

Frank was happy—happy in being permitted to unburthen his soul—to tell her how deeply, how truly he had loved her—to gaze upon the eyes which had haunted his dreams—to grasp her hand in his—even to press it to his lips, so suddenly endowed with nature's eloquence.

To say that Margaret loved him would mislead our readers; she experienced only pity, admiration, gratitude, respect—sentiments dangerously akin to love—but still not love: there was the germ—but not the blossom; she did not even for an instant permit herself to forget that she was a wife.

Frank indulged in these outpourings of the heart only in the absence of his sister—whose place by his side Margaret occasionally took, to embale the affectionate girl to snath a few minutes repose.

Gradually the countenance of Dr. Tytler became less serious when questioned on the subject of his patient; at last he smiled, and permitted the word "hope" to escape him. Poor Bell, headless of everything but the happiness that one little word imparted, kissed his hand and bathed it with her tears. Hope! It was the brother she so fondly loved restored to life, to be again her companion, friend—all that on earth was dear to her. She wept and smiled by turns; the revulsion from despair to joy almost upset her reason.

"He will live!" she exclaimed, throwing herself upon the bosom of Lady Sinclair, and sobbing like a child; "dear, noble, generous-hearted Frank will live! I shall not be a lonely creature in the world. The prayers of the orphan have been heard!"

Dr. Tytler, who at first had been embarrassed by the earnest expression of her gratitude, felt that he had never beheld a more interesting creature. He was one of those men far more likely to fall in love with a heart than a face; and from that moment he felt redoubled interest in the progress of his patient.

And did not Margaret rejoice in the hope thus unexpectedly vouchsafed them? Yes—truly and sincerely did she thank heaven that the life of the young farmer might still be spared. In the solitude of her chamber she held communion with her heart—proved alike its strength and weakness: the result was that her visits to poor Frank gradually ceased, or were made only in company with his sister. He perceived the change, and, in the bitterness of his regrets, almost cursed the cause. He would have preferred a thousand times to die, her hand clasped in his—the voice which made music to his soul breathing sweet words of consolation; to live was to despair.

(To be continued.)

FACETIE.

JONES is a strong believer in guardian angels. "If it were not for them," he asks, "what would keep people from rolling out of bed when they are fast asleep?"

"Do you suppose you can do the landlord in the 'Lady of Lyons'?" said a manager to a seedy actor in quest of an engagement. "I should think I might," was the reply, "I have done a great many landlords."

"STEEEL your heart," said a considerate father to his son, "for you are going among some fascinating girls." "I had much rather steal theirs," said the unpromising young man.

MONYN was asked how it was so very difficult to waken him in the morning. "Indeed, master, it's because of taking your own advice, always to aitid to what I'm about; so whenever I sleep I pays attention to it."

TOM CLARKE, of St. John's, desired a fellow of the same college to lend him Bishop Burnet's "History of the Reformation;" the other told him he could not

spare it out of his chamber, but if he pleased he might come there and read it all day long. Some time after the same gentleman sends to Tom to borrow his bellows; Tom sent him word that he could not possibly spare them out of his chamber, but he might come there and use them all day long if he wished.

WHAT IT WAS.—A lady passing along the street one morning last winter, noticed a little boy scattering salt upon the sidewalk, for the purpose of clearing the ice. "Well, I'm sure," said the lady, "that's real benevolence." "No, it ain't, ma'am," replied the boy, "it's salt."

In one of our schools, a clergyman asked if any of the scholars could tell who was David's grandmother. Thereupon a little girl responded—"A woman, sir!"

A SAILOR'S LOVE OF FAIRPLAY.—In a shipyard, in Pembroke, the other day, a tar from a man-o'-war was observed watching two men dragging a seven-foot cross-cut saw through a huge oak log. The saw was dull, the log very tough, and there they went—saw, saw; pull, push; pull, push. Jack studied the master over awhile, until he came to the conclusion that they were pulling to see who would get the saw, and as one was an immense big chap, while the other was a little fellow, he decided to see fair play; so giving the big one a blow under the ear that capsized him, he jerked the saw out of the log, and giving it to the small one, he sang out, "Now run."

A TACTFUL NOBLEMAN.—A story is told of the Duke of Marlborough, great-grandfather of the present duke, which always amused me. The duke had been for some time a confirmed hypochondriac, and dreaded anything that could in any way ruffle the tranquil monotony of his existence. It is said that he remained for three years without pronouncing a single word, and was entering the fourth year of his silence, when he was told one morning that Madame de Staél, the authoress of "Corinne," was on the point of arriving to pay him a visit. The duke immediately recovered his speech, and roared out, "Take me away—take me away!" to the utter astonishment of the circle around him, who all declared that nothing but the terror of this literary visitation could have put an end to this long and obstinate monomania.—"Celebrities of London and Paris." By Captain R. H. Gronow.

ADVENTURES OF A DRESSING-GOWN.

A lady was anxious to make her husband a present on the occasion of his birthday; and as it happened to fall in winter, she thought a dressing-gown would be a most useful acquisition to his domestic comforts. So she went to a shop and purchased a fine Persian pattern, a merino one, well wadded. She was ignorant of the exact height of her husband; but to make sure of its usefulness, she thought it best to purchase one rather too long than too short. The day was wet; her husband returned in the afternoon, and she presented him with the new article of comfort; and he fancied it indeed a great comfort after he had put off his wet clothes. But it was about ten inches too long. "Oh, never mind," said the affectionate wife, "I can easily shorten it to suit you." They had a party in the evening; they were very merry, and every one of their friends admired the beautiful dressing-gown.

After they had gone to bed, the wind was making such a noise, and the rain so dashing against the window, that the lady could not sleep; her husband, however, reposed soundly. She arose without disturbing him, took the dressing-gown, and commenced her work, cutting off about the length of ten inches, to make it suit her husband's stature, and then went to bed again. She rose early next morning to make some arrangements with her housekeeper, as they had invited several friends to dinner for that day. The husband slept well, which is frequently the case after a merry evening party.

Scarcely had the lady left the room, than her sister—a good-natured, elderly lady, who lived with them—stole in upon tiptoe, in order not to disturb her brother-in-law, and took the dressing-gown, hastening to her room, cutting off ten inches, as she knew on the previous night that it was too long for him. An hour after, the master awoke, and was now anxious to surprise his affectionate wife. He rang the bell, the servant came up and asked his pleasure; upon which he told her to take the dressing-gown to his tailor, and request him to make it shorter by ten inches; he was to do it immediately, and she wait for it. His good lady was detained longer than she expected, and scarcely was the dressing-gown returned from the tailor when his wife came into the room. He had just risen, and purposed now to surprise his wife, and enjoy his comfort. But how surprised was his better half to see her husband in a fine Persian pattern merino shooting-jacket, instead of a comfortable dressing-gown.

CREST-FALLEN.—A lady who had made a fortune by confectionery, applied to the Heralds' College for a coat of arms, and was rather discomfited on being told that they could only give her a—lozenge.—*Punch's Almanack, 1865.*

A BROUGHT FOR THE TIME.—The best house to spend the 31st of December in is a schoolmaster's, because there you are sure of having the new year properly ushered in.—*Punch's Almanack, 1865.*

A DELICATE HINT.—However much we may dislike to be perplexed or inconvenienced during the rest of the year, at Christmas we all wish to be hampered.—*Punch's Almanack, 1865.*

THE CALL!

First Punch and Judy Man (to invalid ditto): "Hullo, Bill, couldn't think what'd become o' yer. Retired from business? Where's a yer been? Why, you don't look well; what's the matter with you?"

Invalid Punch and Judy Man (in a whistling whisper): "Been laid up, Joe; very queer; got over it now, though."

First Punch and Judy Man: "What, have you 'ad a cold?"

Invalid: "Wuss; 'ad a accident. Swallowed the call!"

—Punch's Almanack, 1865.

THINGS NOT WORTH REMEMBERING.

(FOR SERVANTS)

That master has to be called at six o'clock, in order that he may go by the first train on most important business.

That (if called) he'll want his breakfast.

That any bell has been rung twice already.

That you have been told over and over again not to slam the doors.

That your mistress called you five minutes ago.

That the area gate must not be left open.

That the newspaper is not to remain in the kitchen or pantry all day.

That you have broken three of the new wine-glasses and a decanter or two.

That master's boots have to be cleaned—also the silver by a certain time in the day.

That the cloth should be laid for the dining-room dinner twenty minutes before it is required.

That the family requires to be quite as comfortable as those in the kitchen.

—*Punch's Almanack, 1865.*

FOOTE fell asleep while Opie was taking his portrait. On leaving, the painter pressed the wit to give him another sitting. "On one condition," said Foote, "that you do not give me another opiate."—*Punch.*

A FACT.

Strange Curate: "Where does this path go to, my man?"

Half-witted Rustic: "Don't know where 'e goes to, but 'e's generally 'earabouts this time o' day."

—*Punch.*

GOOD MAN FOR A LONG VOYAGE.—*a Cork Cutter.*—*Punch.*

DOING BANTING.—Pocketing half a dozen of his pamphlets, and not stopping to pay for them.—*Punch.*

Meteorological Appointment.

Everybody has heard of the Clerk of the Weather Office, but nobody ever supposed that the office so called was one of the Government offices, notwithstanding the existence of Admiral Fitzroy's department. Still the gallant admiral who presides over that department is not generally imagined to have any control over the weather. It is, however, easy to foresee the questions which will occur to many single-minded persons on reading this announcement, extracted from the *Edinburgh Courant*:

SUPERINTENDENCE OF NORTHERN LIGHTS.—Mr. Young, Engineer of the Lighthouse Steamer Pharos, has received the appointment of Superintendent of Northern Lights, vacant by the resignation of Mr. Scott."

Is it possible that the Northern Lights, of which Mr. Scott has resigned the superintendence, are the same as those referred to by a namesake of Mr. Scott's in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel?"

"And he knew by the streamers that shot so bright, That the spirits were riding the Northern Light."

And has the Admiralty actually appointed Mr. Young to superintend the Aurora Borealis?—*Punch.*

THE aged lady who recently sewed her old umbrella, was rewarded last week with a crop of parasols.—*Punch.*

A TALL, thin, square-built gentleman was seen walking down Regent-street, one afternoon, a few days ago, when all of a sudden he was observed to turn round.—*Punch.*

HOLY-LY WRONG.—An Irish paper, in reference to the projected construction of a tunnel under the river at Dublin, says:—"A Thames Tunnel is about to be constructed under the Liffey." How the Thames Tunnel can be in two places at once—or, at all events,

in any other place than under the Thames—it is for the compatriots of Sir Boyle Roche to show.—*Fun.*

INFANTS.—We do not know whether more Williams are born in December than in any other month, but we think it not improbable from the number of little Bills one meets with.—*Fun.*

I KNOW A BANKS.—An American paper states that the swords which have been presented to General Banks are valued at twenty thousand dollars. In the present state of finances and fighting in America, we would rather belong to the banks that draw the money than those that draw the sword.—*Fun.*

SCIENCE.

The Mont Cenis tunnel, when completed, will be 12,220 metres in length. The machine used for the purpose is M. Sommier's perforator, set in motion by compressed air. On the Bardoneche side this year the average advance per month has been 50 metres; on the Modane side it has not exceeded 38 metres per month, owing to the greater hardness of the rock on that side; there still remains a length of about 8,250 metres to be got through. When completed, the tunnel will have required the piercing of 1,220,000 holes, 550,000 kilogrammes of gunpowder, 1,550,000 metres of slow match; the number of bayonets rendered unserviceable will amount to 245,000.

GERMAN SILVER FOR BEARINGS.—Have any of our mechanics ever tried German silver for hot bearings? It is rather costly, but for chronic hot bearings and on fine work money is hardly an object. From its nature it would seem to be an excellent thing, as it is tough, feels "greasy" to the touch, and has a close grain analogous to Babbit metal. Here is a formula for making it:—It is composed of 25 parts nickel, 25 zinc, and 50 copper. To roll, it is better to make it 50 copper and 20 zinc. True German silver is 40·4 copper, 31·6 nickel, 28·4 zinc, 2·6 iron. By varying the proportions somewhat, a useful composition might be made, which could be sold profitably.

NUMBERS ON COINS.—Many inquiries have reached us in reference to certain small figures which appear upon nearly the whole of the gold and silver coins issued from the Royal Mint during the year 1861, and the motive of the authorities of the mint in placing them there. It seems that, from a desire to identify the coins struck from each particular die with the particular stamping-press in which it was used, the numbering system was adopted. For example, let it be supposed that on the 1st of January in the present year four presses of the eight which exist at the mint were employed in the production of sovereigns; then these would have required to be supplied with four pairs of dies. Under ordinary circumstances the resulting coins would have been in all respects exactly similar to each other, and when intermixed, it would not have been possible to ascertain the press at which any individual piece selected from the mass had been coined. If, however, either one of a pair of dies affixed to a press were marked with numbers apart from the date and ordinary impression upon it, and note were made of the time and the number of the press at which it was used, it is clear that reference to that note would enable the officers of the mint, at any subsequent period, to decide with certainty as to which press gave birth to the numbered coin. By the same means the day and the hour of its coming into existence would be determined. This is really what has been done with the whole of the coining dies employed for the stamping of every denomination of gold and silver money—except the threepenny-piece, which was considered too insignificant to be so dealt with—at the mint during the current year. When a die wears out—and few last more than a single day, or strike more than 25,000 pieces each—a new die with a new number takes its place; then the number, that of the press, and the date and the hour of the change are recorded.

THE KING OF PRUSSIA AND HIS ARMY.—The King of Prussia has issued the following order of the day to his army:—"The glorious war against Denmark is ended. It has been followed by a glorious peace. For nearly half a century the armies of Prussia have remained inactive, save during a brief but honourable period. You, soldiers of my army, who have had the privilege of carrying into effect the operations of the recent war, have renewed the glory of the Prussian arms. Thanks to your heroism, the days of Doppel and Alsen are handed down to future generations in the history of warfare. My fleet, newly organized, has worthily co-operated with the land forces, and in its first engagements was not dismayed by the number of the enemy's ships. In concert with the brave troops of my august ally, the Emperor of

Austria, you have everywhere conquered the enemy. The blessing of providence has rested upon you, because you have feared God, and have been faithful to your duty, obedient and brave; but the other portions of my army have also merited my satisfaction. Some considerable part of that army has been entrusted with the painful task of protecting the eastern frontiers of the state against the rebellion by which they were threatened. The other corps have by indefatigable services maintained our reputation of being always ready for war. Thus the new organization I have introduced into the service has undergone its trial with success. I survey with joy and pride the whole of my glorious military force. In my own name and in that of my country, I express to you my entire thanks, and my royal gratitude. May God further bless and watch over Prussia."—(Signed) WILLIAM."

BEAUTY, MUSIC, AND INNOCENCY.

I love whate'er is beautiful—

The summer flowers that fling
Their perfume to the passing gale,
The crystal mountain spring;
The trees arrayed in robes of green,
The sunlight on the lea,
And insects glistening in its rays,
Are beautiful to me.

I love whate'er is musical—

In summer's genial hours,
The breeze that makes low melody
Among the trees and flowers;
The birds that trill their happy notes,
The rills that sing in glee,
The voice of youth in happiness,
Are musical to me.

I love whate'er is innocent—

A heart unstained by guile
Is more than simple beauty owns,
And more than music's wife;
Tis far a richer offering,
And prized far more shall be
Than what in life is beautiful
Or musical to me.

G. W. W.

GEMS.

THERE should be joy in every fibre of a youthful frame, like the sap of life in a tree in Spring.

TEARS are often the gentlest and softest dew to water the flowers of joy.

HOWEVER many may be the roses that bloom in the face, it is well that the wild weed merriment should grow strong in the heart.

THE MIND.—The Almighty gives mind, man can only give example and education. The natural minds in men are like the natural fields in agriculture. There is every degree of fertility, but they will all grow noxious weeds unless cultivated and cared for.

FORTY YEARS.—Forty years seemed a long and weary pilgrimage to tread. It now seems but a step. And yet, along the way are broken shrines where a thousand hopes have wasted into ashes; footprints sacred under the drifting dust; green mounds whose grass is fresh with the watering of tears; shadows even, which we would not forget. We will garner the sunshine of those years, and with chastened steps and reasonable hope push on towards the evening whose signal lights will be seen swinging where the waters are still and storms never beat.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

WINE AS MEDICINE.—A celebrated physician, residing at Metz, has written a treatise on the medicinal qualities of wine, in which he states that, considering wine in the point of view of the mineral salts which it contains in large quantity, such as potash, soda, lime, magnesia, iron, manganese, chlorides, sulphates, carbonates, phosphates, the juice of the grape constitutes a real natural mineral liquid as active and even more charged with mineral principles than many justly esteemed spirits.

HOW TO ACT WHEN THE CLOTHES TAKE FIRE.—Three persons out of four would rush right up to the burning individual, and begin to paw with their hands without any definite aim. It is useless to tell the victim to do this or that, or call for water. In fact, it is generally best not to say a word, but seize a blanket from bed, or a cloak, or any woollen fabric—if none is at hand, take any woollen material—hold the corners as far apart as you can, stretch them out higher than your head, and, running boldly to the person, make a motion of clasping in the arms, most about the shoulders. This instantly smothers the fire and saves

the face. The next instant throw the unfortunate person on the floor. This is an additional safety to the face and breath, and any remnant of flame can be put out more leisurely. The next instant immerse the burnt part in cold water, and all pain will cease with the rapidity of lightning. Next, get some common flour, remove from the water, and cover the burnt parts with an inch thickness of flour, if possible; put the patient to bed, and do all that is possible to soothe until the physician arrives. Let the flour remain until it falls off itself, when a beautiful new skin will be found. Unless the burns are deep, no other application is needed. The dry flour for burns is the most admirable remedy ever proposed. The principle of its action is that, like the water, it causes instant and perfect relief from pain, by totally excluding the air from the injured parts. Spanish whiting and cold water, of a musky consistency, are preferred by some. Dredge on the flour until no more will stick, and cover with cotton batting.

THE MANUFACTURE OF SODA WATER.—Soda water is simply water saturated with carbonic acid under pressure. Water has the property of absorbing its own volume of carbonic acid at all pressures. At the atmospheric pressure a cubic foot of carbonic acid weighs 1·544th as much as a cubic foot of water; at 2 atmospheres the quantity or weight of carbonic acid in a cubic foot is doubled, at 3 atmospheres it is trebled, and so on. As a cubic foot of water absorbs a cubic foot of the gas at any pressure, of course the higher the pressure the larger is the quantity by weight which the water will absorb. In making soda water the gas is compressed to the extent of some 10 or 12 atmospheres, and then, when the pressure is removed, the gas escapes, producing a sparkling effervescence. As the carbonic acid is generally obtained by pouring sulphuric acid upon marble dust, the apparatus must be so arranged as to prevent the poisonous sulphuric acid from getting into the beverage. This is done by the manufacturers of soda water apparatus.

MISCELLANEOUS.

YOU win a woman by appealing to her impulses; you win a man by appealing to his interests. It is all the difference between a compliment and a bribe.

THE new Mexican postage-stamp, which has just been issued, is an oval figure of an eagle, crowned with the prickly pear of Mexico in its claws, surmounted with the words "Correos Mexico," and, underneath the value.

OCEAN DEPTHS.—The average depth of the Atlantic ocean is set down at 13,400 feet, that of the Pacific at 18,000. On the western side of St. Helena soundings were made, it is said, to the depth of 27,000 feet—five miles and a quarter—without touching bottom.

THE latest novelty from Compiègne is the announcement that "La Boulangère" was danced. This dance is of the fashions of hundred years ago, and its merit consists in dancing through all the rooms of the house to the tune of "The Baker she has got some crowns," in the course of which every one joins.

A GRAND scheme of a lottery for the salvation of souls has just been got up in Mexico. The price of a ticket is two and a half pence—half a real—and the fortunate winner of prizes becomes the possessor of masses which will expedite his own soul to heaven, or that of any other man.

SOME savvies, cutting up the trunk of an elm-tree the other day, found in the centre of it a blackbird's nest, containing eggs. The nest was completely inclosed in the log by the growth of very many years. The eggs fell to pieces on being exposed to the air, but the nest has been preserved.

THE Countess Danner, the Morganatic widow of the late King of Denmark, has presented to the Museum of Copenhagen the pictures and statues which had been left by her royal husband, with several other objects of art, and among them two magnificent porcelain vases, presented by the Emperor Napoleon.

RICE PAPER TREE.—The rice-paper tree has been naturalized in New South Wales, and has proved itself to be a very hardy plant, having survived the operation of great heat and cold, moisture and drought. The tree is a native of China, and is known as the source of that peculiar spongy fabric upon which the Chinese paint their gaudy pictures of butterflies, etc.

CONFIDENCE.—A little girl sleeping by her mother's side awoke in a severe thunder-storm, and, nestling in terror near to the mother, and shrinking into the smallest possible space, said, trembling, "Mother, are you afraid?" "No, my dear," answered the lady, calmly. "Oh, well," said the child, assuming her full proportions, and again disposing herself for sleep, if you're not afraid, I'm not afraid," and was soon slumbering quiet.

CONTENTS.

THE KEEPER OF THE FERRY	ALL ALONE	308
I KNEW A LITTLE MAIDEN	THE STORY OF A PONTHAULT	312
MESAR THE MISER	NOT A MARRYING MAN	313
STRAY NOTES ON FLOWERS	WOMAN AND HER MAN	314
THE GOLD WATCH	THE	316
EDUCATION	FACTS	316
THE ARCHDUKE	SCIENCE	319
STEPMOTHERS	BEAUTY, MUSIC, AND LITERATURE	319
A MONGOOSE DWELLING	GEMS	319
LADY VENETIA	HOUSEHOLD THEATRICALS	319
THE WARMING VOICE	MISCELLANEOUS	319

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

IGNORAMUS.—We will make inquiry on the subject, and inform you of the particulars in a subsequent number.

BLUE PAPER.—In No. 63 there is a recipe for making invisible ink, which you must certainly have overlooked. It will, we think, answer your purpose perfectly.

R. A.—We cannot suggest anything better as a New Year's gift to your friend than a volume of *The London Reader*. Three volumes are now published, and the price of each is 4s. 6d.

SOPHIE.—We will not fail to comply with your request, should occasion arise.

ELÉS DE MERANIE.—A "kalydor" or cosmetic for keeping the complexion clear may be made with a pint of rose water, mixed with two drachms of tincture of benzoin. It should be applied with a soft towel.

Z. Z. A. A.—We know nothing of the origin of the surnames in question, nor do we ever give armorial bearings. You would have no legal claim to the money after the expiration of twenty years; but would probably recover it, by favour of the Crown, notwithstanding the lapse of time since heirs were sought for; if you can prove your right to it. The handwriting will do very well for a Government office.

BONAVVENTURE.—There can be no doubt that your letters to your brother in Philadelphia have been intercepted by his spiritual superior. If you have any reason for supposing that he is under personal restraint as a prisoner, you should communicate with the British ambassador at Washington.

W. P. W.—The old Houses of Parliament were destroyed by fire on the 16th October, 1834. The foundation-stone of the present palace of the Parliament was laid on the 27th April, 1840; the architect being Mr. (afterwards created Sir Charles) Barry.

W. C. W. R.—The piece of water which formerly existed in the north-east corner of the Green Park was the property of the Chelsea Waterworks Company; and on application to the company, or to the Board of Works, you will doubtless be supplied with all the particulars relating to its removal.

LIMONIA.—There is no doubt at all that "painting" is injurious to the skin. For a cosmetic for improving the complexion, see reply to "Elé de Meranie."

INDALIA.—The following recipe for dyeing hair black has been recommended.—Take equal parts of litharge and lime; mix well, and form into a paste with water. Cleanse the hair well (washing will not injure it) with soda and water, and then apply the paste pretty thick at bed-time, and cover the hair with an oilskin cap; in the morning brush out the powder carefully.

H. J. M.—If you will make use of a depilatory in order to get rid of superfluous hair, you will find in No. 63 a recipe which has the merit of being good and simple, and as little objectionable as such preparations can be.

L. F.—The assertion is quite correct—a room is never empty. Even if an apartment presents to the view nothing but its naked walls, it is not literally empty—it is full of air, just as a boat sunk in a river is full of water; and if a room were perfectly air-tight, even an orange could not be thrust into it additionally without requiring the force of something like a half-handful weight.

DEPLORABLE.—Mustaches are something like Owen Glendower's spirits—there is a doubt whether they will "come" when they are wanted. It is vexatious, no doubt, to be told by your *fiancée* that she will not go to the hymen altar till you have grown, and that—no mustache, no marriage. In No. 45 you will find a recipe which will assist in producing the desired fibrous adornments.

W. S. B.—There has always been much controversy as to the warmth imparted to the earth by a covering of snow; we believe, however, that by experiment it has been found that thermometer plunged in snow to the depth of about four inches has sometimes marked nine degrees of heat greater than at the surface.

BUNNIES.—If you can trace a plan, and have a knowledge of taking out quantities, we should think it would you could obtain employment as a clerk in an architect's or builder's office. The handwriting is capable of improvement, but would not probably render you ineligible.

D. W. F.—The general cause of fog is the upper region of the atmosphere being colder than the lower, and thus checking the ascent of the aqueous vapour, and keeping it near the surface of the earth. In London and other great cities, where much coal is burnt, the vast quantity of fuliginous matter floating in the atmosphere mingles with this vapour. The fog of London never rises more than 20 feet above the same level.

MARY B., who is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 2½ in. in height, slight figure, brown hair, hazel eyes, fresh colour, small features, lively, affectionate, and good-tempered, and thinks she could make home happy, would be happy to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman, who need not necessarily be good-looking, but must be steady and affectionate.

CECIL, who is twenty years of age, good-looking, gentlemanly, and 5 ft. 6 in. in height, having dark hair and mustaches, and a loving disposition, would be very glad to make the acquaintance of some one of our fair readers, with a view to matrimony (and to this end would be happy to correspond with "Jesus" or "Emily").

ROSE and LILLIAN are desirous of corresponding with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony (if tall pre-

ferrred, and good looks not necessary, although desirable). "Rose" is of medium height, prepossessing in appearance, has a clear complexion, with slight colour, blue eyes, brown hair, and is twenty-two years of age. "Lillian" is tall and fair, has blue eyes, dark hair, is of a lively disposition, and a good vocalist. Both have good tempers, and have only loving hearts to offer. "Lillian's" age is twenty-one.

A. R.—The name Adeline is from the German, and signifies a princess; Rachel comes from the Hebrew, and means a lamb.

LETT.—Visits after balls and parties should be made within a month. You may send your card by post, if you reside at a distance; but if living near, it is polite to send a servant, or to call personally. In the latter case, a corner should turned down.

D. JASMINE.—Woolens and furs are worn in winter as portions of clothing, because they are very bad conductors of heat, and therefore prevent the warmth of the body from being drawn off by the cold air.

T. W.—A man who commits bigamy can be prosecuted whenever he can be found, and the offence is proved. Handwriting is scarcely good enough for a mercantile office.

S. F. F.—There is no difficulty whatever in the way of pronouncing a will at Doctors' Common, if you know the year of the testator's death. You will have merely to write on a slip of paper the testator's name and the year of his decease, giving this to a clerk, and at the same time paying a shilling. You will then be at liberty to examine the Indexes, and when you have found the particular name, the clerk will hand you the will of the deceased for perusal.

LITTLE DEEDS.

I had a little spot of ground,
Where blade nor blossom grew,
Though the bright sunshine all around
Life-giving radiance threw.
I mourned to see a spot so bare
Of leaves of cheerful green,
And thought of buds and blossoms rare,
That then might fling their sheen.

Some seeds of various kinds lay by—
I knew not what they were—
But lightly tiring o'er the soil,
I strewed them thickly there;
And day by day I watched them spring
From out the fertile earth.
And hoped thence many a lovely thing
Of beauty would have birth.

But as I marked their leaves unfold,
As weeds before my view,
And saw how stubbornly and bold
Their rank luxuriance grew,—
I sigh'd to think that I had done
Unwittingly a thing,
That caused, where fragrant flowers should thrive,
Unsightly weeds to spring.

And thus I mused : the things we do
With little heed or ken,
May prove of worthless growth, and strew
With thorns the path of men—
For little deeds, like little seeds.

May flowers prove of noxious weeds.

NANO.

Y. J.—A married woman may make a testamentary disposition of her property if it consist of a separate estate, as appears to have been that belonging to your mother. As far as we can understand your statement, you would not cease to be her hair: but if litigation is contemplated, of course, you must consult a solicitor.

MADOLINE.—To wash or clean kid gloves, take a small quantity of cow's milk in a saucer, then take a piece of brown soap, and a clean cloth folded two or three times, over the latter spreading out the glove smooth and neat. Then, with a piece of flannel dipped in milk, rub off a good quantity of the soap, and rub the glove downwards, towards the tips of the fingers, holding it firmly. Continue this until the glove, if white, becomes of a dingy yellow; or, if it be coloured, it looks dark and spoilt. Lay it to dry, when it will look nearly equal to new.

L.S.E.—The following is a simple and good preparation to use as a remedy for sore throat:—Pour a pint of boiling water upon twenty or thirty leaves of common sage; let the infusion stand for half an hour, then add vinegar sufficient to make it moderately acid, and honey according to taste. Use several times daily, and it will not fail to produce the desired effect.

J. AND C.—J. is in error. *Hither, thither, and whither*, denoting to a place, have been superseded by *here, there, and where*. But there is no good reason why they should not be used; and where they are employed, it is, of course, unnecessary to add the word *to*, because it is implied; thus "where are you going?" would be correct; "where are you going to?" incorrect.

ANNE W.—The following is a very good (and genuine Indian) receipt for a curry powder:—Turmeric, coriander, black pepper, four ounces each; fenugreek, three ounces; ginger, two ounces; cumin seed, ground rice, one ounce each; cayenne pepper, cardamom, half an ounce each.

M. M.—The readiest and simplest, and also the most effective, means of removing ink stains is to wash the spot with milk, or immerse the article in it. The ink will be entirely discharged, and the article be uninjured.

FRED. POWERS, who is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, having dark hair and mustache, considered very good-looking, in an architect's office, with a salary of £200 per annum, and very respectable, would be glad to enter into a matrimonial correspondence with any young lady (if living near Brompton preferred) who is of respectable family, accomplished, and good-looking.

H. F. S.—The lines entitled "Memory Bells" unfortunately reached us too late; their insertion in our columns now would be unseemly; and, consequently, they are declined, with thanks.

E. E. T.—You can estimate the distance of a thunder-storm by observing how many seconds elapse between a flash of lightning and the thunder, and multiplying them by 1,142, the number of feet which sound travels in a second: the product will be the distance in feet. In the absence of a watch, the pulsations at the wrist may be counted as

seconds, by deducting one from every 7 or 8. Thunder can scarcely ever be heard more than 20 or 30 miles from the flash which produces it; but lightning (or the reflection of it in the clouds, i.e., "sheet lightning,") may be seen at a distance of 150 or 200 miles.

W. M. PAGE.—The handwriting is tolerably good.

E. C. S.—Apply to the Secretary of the French Embassy, Albert Gate.

HILDA, who is twenty-three years of age, tall, with rosy cheeks, dark brown wavy hair, amiable and domesticated, and is sure she should make a good wife, would be happy to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman, who must be dark, not necessarily good-looking, but amiable, not under twenty-three years of age, and respectable. (Handwriting rather ladylike.)

A. J. L.—The following is a very effectual and easy recipe for the cure of warts, and is preferable to lunar caustic:—Wash a large-sized raw carrot in cold water; then scrape with a knife the red or outer coat, and mix it with a quantity of common salt. Apply this mixture to the part affected as a poultice, and, after a week or so, the warts will entirely disappear.

D.—Dyspepsia is indigestion; and that is caused in various ways—it may be induced by partaking of food too frequently or too seldom—by eating too much or too little—by over-work, anxiety, or sedentary employment. Regular meals in sufficient quantity and of good quality, not eaten rapidly, but properly masticated, and the avoidance of irregular habits, are generally prescribed to persons suffering from dyspepsia.

LILLIAN, a lady eighteen years of age, of medium height, with black curly hair, black eyes, and rosy cheeks, is passionately fond of music, and as thoroughly competent to superintend the management of the kitchen as to adorn the drawing room. Intimates that she is willing to assume the fettors of matrimony, whenever her best ideas presents herself. Lillian has an income of £500 a year, and will have a dowry of £1,000 when married.

JUVENIA.—The limits of age of candidates for the appointment of assistant clerks and accountants in the Education Office is, for the former, eighteen to twenty-five years, and for the latter, twenty-three to thirty. The necessary qualifications for both comprise handwriting and orthography, making fair copies from rough notes; arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions), calculation of per-centages, English composition, book-keeping, *précis* and digest of returns into summaries. Your handwriting is very good indeed.

F. E. S.—Ventriloquism simply consists in a slow and gradual expiration, preceded by a strong and deep inspiration, by which a considerable quantity of air is introduced into the lungs, which is afterwards acted upon by the muscles of the throat. Ventriloquists have acquired by practice the power of exercising the veil of the palate in such a manner that, by raising or depressing it, they dilate or contract the inner nostrils, and thus render the voice either low and seemingly distant, or loud and seemingly near.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"Nelly K." would be pleased to correspond matrimonially with "Keeper of the Ferry" in twenty years of age, *précis* in figure, of fair complexion, has brown hair and large dark eyes; having been housekeeper at home for the last three years, thoroughly understands domestic management; is considered a very good pianist; and her greatest wish would be to make her husband an home happy. "Monte," a young naval officer, just returned from abroad, is desirous of making the acquaintance of "Jessie Alice," with a view to matrimony. "T. W. C." is answer to "Rose," states that he would be happy if permitted to correspond matrimonially. Is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, fair, and considered handsome. "B. S." replies to "S. H." that he is a widower, aged forty-seven, of good temper and steady habits, and highly respectable; has an income of £100 per annum, also a small property and some money—in response to "S. H." "Lonely Home" states that he is somewhat above the middle age, and ten years the lady's senior; yet, being a young man for his age, of strictly steady habits, and admitted to possess a good temper, he trusts that the difference of ten years will not be a fatal objection to opening a matrimonial correspondence with "S. H." Has an income of about £500 a year, with ample leisure and opportunity to increase it, and is free from debts, encumbrances, bodily ailment, whims, and caprices. "Ida M." has no objection to grant the matrimonial introduction which "H. T. W." wishes. Is very fair, rather tall, considered a good figure, very fond of music, and speaks French and Italian—"A Nottingham Reader" would be glad to hear further from "Harriet," with a view to matrimony. Is of fair complexion, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, and nearly twenty years of age—"Doncaster" writes:—"It would give me great pleasure to correspond matrimonially with "A. T. W." Is of good family, twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, have a nice little income of my own, and will try my best to have her happy company."—"Mary" and "Maggie" would feel highly gratified in making the matrimonial acquaintance of "William" and "James."—"Mary" thinks "William" would suit her, while "Maggie" prefers "James."—"Laura" (No. 77) is very desirous of hearing further from either "Lonely James" or "A Widower."—"Daisy" is disposed to enter into a matrimonial correspondence with "J. W. P." "Daisy" is twenty-eight years of age, dark, and rather *petite*; very domesticated, and would try to make home happy. "Daisy" wishes to know what business "J. W. P." is in.

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